The ARYAN PATH

Vol. XXXIII DECEMBER 1962 No. 12

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"THEOSOPHY HALL," NEW MARINE LINES — BOMBAY, INDIA

THE ARYAN PATH

ORGAN OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

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CONTRIBUTIONS—The Editor is responsible for unsigned articles only and is not necessarily in agreement with the views of the contributors, to whom free expression of opinion is given.

SUBSCRIPTIONS—THE ARYAN PATH is published monthly. No subscriptions are accepted for less than twelve months, but subscriptions may begin with any desired number. All orders should be accompanied by the necessary remittance to the Manager, THE ARYAN PATH, 1/1, Bugle Rock Road, Bangalore 4, or to our London Office at 62, Queen's Gardens, London, W. 2.

PRICES: India—Single copy 75 *naye paise*; per annum Rs. 6.00

Europe—Single copy 1*s*. 6*d*; per annum 12*s*. or equivalent.

Americas—Single copy 35 cents; per annum $3.00

All post free

Available in the U.S.A. from
Eastern News Distributors
255, Seventh Avenue, New York 1, N.Y.

Back numbers are available on special application

THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—The Voice of the Silence

VOL. XXXIII DECEMBER 1962 No. 12

LITERATURE AS A MORAL FORCE

[WE reprint below a thoughtful contribution by the late **Professor M. D. Altekar,** whose long familiarity with the Poet-Saints of Maharashtra, with their sturdy insistence upon moral values, forms the basis of his approach to the theme. It appeared originally in THE ARYAN PATH of January 1945. Readers will find it interesting to compare Shrimati Lila Ray's review-article on "The Writer's Dilemma" and Mr. R. M. Fox's Correspondence: "Literature and Social Morality," both of which appear in this issue.—ED.]

WE live in an age in which "Art for Art's Sake" finds favour with a number of people. According to them, all art, including literature, must please, must cause delight. They do not pause, however, to consider what artistic pleasure is. Is it the kind of pleasure that a greedy man experiences when he notices valuable things belonging to others? Is it the kind of pleasure that, in the famous Sanskrit drama *Mricchakatika,* Shakar experiences in looking at Vasantasena, or, in the same drama, Charudatta finds in meeting the same girl? It is not unlikely that these people who continuously talk of "Art for Art's Sake" are not fully aware of modern psychology and æsthetics. We hear it said that art must please, that it should not be confused with a motive, that it is only the inspiration of the artist, and that it is a revelation to the reader or to the spectator or to the listener, etc. This is a view we hear so often, that, by the very process of repetition, we almost come to believe in it without considering its logical consequences.

At the same time, we have been witnessing the amazing phenomenon that almost every form of art is being devoted to the service of propaganda — and propaganda almost always imposes restrictions on expression in all art, and, therefore, in literature, because what is called *belles lettres,* such as poetry, the drama and the novel, is art. The newspaper press, barring some honourable exceptions, has become a huge

engine of propaganda in the hands of interested people, and the process is made easy by capitalistic adventure in that direction. The screen has been very directly made an instrument of propaganda, and in this way most of the art forms are being more and more utilized for this purpose. Education itself is being made a huge means of propaganda. All this propaganda, which is very akin to various regular tricks of advertisement, means restriction of the freedom of expression. Thus we have come to a pass where literature along with other art forms is produced with the motive of bringing profit and power to certain interested individuals, parties and groups. Under these circumstances, the formula "Art for Art's Sake" strikes one as a happy solution of these various difficulties. That is why the slogan becomes popular, even with people who are sane and cautious, and would ordinarily come to sound conclusions about most questions.

We must, therefore, give a little closer attention to this, taking literature as our main theme for discussion, to find out what motives should be behind literature. Motiveless literature, or motiveless art, is an idea that can exist only in a complete vacuum and has no bearing on what may be called practical life. The discussion has become necessary since a portion of literature which some people believe to be not inclined to be favourable to moral good has been undoubtedly disturbing the peace of mind of many, call them orthodox if you will or reactionary even, if you please. Of course the question will be asked: is it the function of literature to wield a moral influence or is it its real function to give pleasure? We have found that literature, apart from giving pleasure, does exert some kind of influence; that is why it is being so widely used for the purposes of propaganda, and if this proposition is accepted, then, when literature does exercise influence, when it is a force and not merely entertaining, it stands to reason that it should be a force in the right direction rather than in the wrong.

Our discussion will yield, possibly, faithful results if we study a little carefully what have been the motives of great writers in all times and climes and what are the particular motives that appear to have influenced several writers of modern times, writers who profess to have been inspired by a new vision. Such a comparative study has become necessary since the last war and the seriousness of the situation has been enhanced by the present war. Values have undergone deep changes in these wars for the simple reason that man has to stand terrible strains and stresses in such times, and what man feels is reflected by poets or writers.

We have seen all these years that most Governments have been using literature and the screen for purposes of propaganda. This use of literature may be praised or condemned according to one's particular views. It is clear, however, that this use cannot be described legitimately as producing literature with a purpose, because that phrase always means and must mean literature with a sound purpose.

Now, the moment ordinary words are used in relation to a conflict among parties, the words lose their ordinary meanings and, in any case, lose their absolute meanings. The word liberty is being continuously used by the Allied Nations with a view to condemning the Axis nations. But the moment India is mentioned in connection with liberty, cautious politicians in Great Britain and in the U.S.A. (and all true politicians are cautious people) become silent or shake their heads and rub their noses. In talking of the Eastern problem or the Far Eastern problem they either forget all about India or they pretend to believe that India has been already granted freedom. So extremists in India get impatient and declare that the word liberty has no meaning.

The point is that it is in this way that words are misused and it is good to remember that great literary persons all over the world have built up a science of using words very correctly. All literature should have that science as its basis and to follow that science is to aid literature to be a great moral force. Governments and politicians are no authority on literature but unfortunately they try to control it and obstruct it when it goes against them or exposes the mischief that they do. The poet speaks in a language that has to be understood, and there is a certain way to understand it. But the poet does not want to mislead; he is never ambiguous. Only you need to be intelligent and sympathetic. So we should look to what great masters have to say about the whole thing.

The opening stanza in the *Raghuvaṃśa,* the famous *mahākāvya* of Kalidasa, contains a salute to the god Shiva and his consort, the beautiful Parvati. The poet compares the union of Shiva and Parvati to the union between the word and its meaning. Now the union between Shiva and Parvati — you will know all about it if you read the *Kumārasaṃbhava,* another *mahākāvya* of Kalidasa's — was the union of knowledge with beauty. Shiva represents knowledge, penance, self-discipline, power. Parvati represents beauty, innocence, a desire to reach greater heights, heights on which one like Shiva resides. The union between the word and its meaning must be, according to Kalidasa, a union between Shiva and Parvati, which means that the two elements that must be the

basis of literature in its art forms like the drama, poetry, fiction etc., are beauty and power; and power includes knowledge because knowledge is power.

Literature, to be true literature, must be vital and, though it may be light, even light literature should not be trivial, common and cheap. To use a simile from medicine, literature should be full of vitamins. Vitamins are found in a number of common articles that we eat. So treatment of a common subject by a poet (the term poet is used here in its widest sense) becomes literature if he puts vitality into it and if thereby the vitality of the reader is improved, and such literature is said to exert great moral influence and becomes a great moral force. Do those writers who persistently indulge in themes of free-love and what they call new thought (which often hides only old vulgarities and old vagaries) make their readers better and stronger, less prone to temptation and more capable of resisting temptation? After all, self-control and proper control of egotism are the test of all vitality, and do those new writers teach men and women to pass that test?

That is the crux of the whole matter, and it is no use to talk about the work of instincts and the necessity to follow instincts, as a reply to that or a commentary on it. After all, man's victory over instincts is the measure of his civilization. Thus true literature inculcates goodness, soundness, vitality, self-control. As opposed to that, harmful literature injects morbidity into man's mind, and what is injected is generally what is in the mind of the writer.

Sincerity is the greatest possession of an author, and it is sincerity that makes an artist of him. And sincerity flows from the objectivity which is nothing other than what may be called disinterestedness. Objectivity is often opposed to subjectivity, but one may speak or write sincerely about oneself. One may, but, more often than not, one will not, and that is why true art is always, strictly speaking, objective. And when subjectivity is free from the vice of interestedness, it is really an objective outlook applied to one's self. That can be achieved but it is exceedingly rare and difficult of achievement.

Therefore, the rule to be laid down for an author is that he should be objective. If, for instance, Shakespeare had not been disinterested, if he had not been objective, his wonderful pen could not have described such different types of women as Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, Juliet; or such different types of men as Othello, King Lear, Hamlet, the Jew, Macbeth. What some of the writers of later days have overlooked is this supreme significance of disinterestedness or what is popularly

known as objectivity, which is in truth sincerity. Opposed to that is not subjectivity but egotism which leads to morbidity and insincerity.

It is thus seen that literature is a moral force. That it is twisted by some and misused by others is no reason why we should reject all literature as propaganda or as a force that weakens the moral fibre. Protest against propaganda is quite legitimate because advertisement is not literature. So also protest against the doctrine that literature should have no motive is legitimate, because all authors who are considered to be great in different languages have not only given pleasure; they also have combined with artistic expression the quality that uplifts the mind and rejects the trivial. This process of uplift is an indirect process and in some cases it is perceived only by the initiated. And the initiated are always few. This process of indirect expression is called *Vyañjana* or suggestion, in Sanskrit poetics. The motive in a fine literary piece is always suggested, scarcely ever directly expressed. The direct expression gives pleasure (that is why literature is an art form) while the suggestion, when you understand it, instructs, uplifts, ennobles, and raises the reader to higher altitudes. This quality of raising the reader to a higher level is an essential of all fine literature and it is the quality that makes it a potent moral force.

This quality of raising, uplifting, ennobling, can be achieved in whatever type of literary composition the writer may adopt. It may be realism or idealism, it may be actual description or imaginary delineation. You may essay to depict the best in humanity or the worst; this quality does not depend upon the writer's subject but depends upon his manner of writing. At the same time, though the writer may be objective, the quality of objectivity has its limits except in such masters as Kalidasa or Shakespeare of whose personal life we know next to nothing but of whom we know definitely that they do not inspire a wrong thought or encourage a wrong idea. They uphold the worthy and they come instinctively to conclusions which philosophers arrive at after great argument. . . .

. . . nowhere do we find that the poet [Shakespeare] applauds the villainy [of Iago]. He condemns it at all stages and his reader or spectator learns to condemn it and not condone it as some choice modern writers try to do. The modern writer of this type pitches a tent of his own just here. He will try to make wrong look like right and will attribute everything either to environment or to instincts. He forgets usually that explanation may at most point out extenuating circumstances; it can never excuse. This new writer will tell you that the wrong done was

not wrong; or that it was inevitable, and that in any case the doer of the wrong could not be held responsible for his action. He will go further and state that there are circumstances in which wrong inevitably happens; therefore you must not look upon it as wrong; it should be considered right. And thus a queer propaganda in aid of wrong is set into motion and in time assumes the role of a new morality.

All great literature has supported eternal verities which form the basis of all true morality and it is the privilege of all great writers to inculcate sound principles. Hundreds of examples can be culled from the works of great writers to show that they upheld certain ways of conduct and condemned certain others. What they condemned was the wrong principle and what they upheld was the right one. It is a very interesting study in literature to compare the ideas of poets and to find out the unanimity amongst them about certain basic ideas. That is a great subject by itself; at this point we may withdraw from the discussion with a request to all writers of power to see to it that they produce literature that aids the moral and the spiritual forces of the world.

M. D. ALTEKAR

ETHICAL SCIENCE arranges the elements which poetry has created and propounds schemes and proposes examples of civil and domestic life: nor is it for want of admirable doctrines that men hate, and despise, and censure, and deceive, and subjugate one another. But poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought.... The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delights, which have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and which form new intervals and interstices whose void for ever craves fresh food. Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the organ of the moral nature of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb.

—SHELLEY

ON LIVING ALONE

[**Mr. R. H. Ward** is a writer, lecturer and broadcaster, particularly interested in peace movements and the applications of non-violence, and in religious and literary subjects. He has written often for THE ARYAN PATH, and we have especial pleasure in printing these simply expressed but profoundly conceived reflections.—ED.]

SUPPOSE that, by reason of those accidents which we sometimes like to dignify with the name of destiny, a man who for the first five decades of his life has never lived alone is suddenly confronted with the necessity for doing so; suppose, more exactly, that his marriage has failed and has had in any case no issue, and that he has no brothers or sisters, and indeed no living relatives other than cousins who are distant in more than one sense, while it happens that, just at this same time in his life, several of his closest friends have died, and he has come to live in a country district in which he is a stranger; suppose, in other words, that this man of fifty finds himself altogether what is called "alone in the world" — what sort of experience is this, and what, since all experience has meaning if it is looked for in the right way, can this experience mean to him?

This will depend on the kind of man he is, so that it is necessary to suppose certain other and more particular things about him: that he is an affectionate and sociable person who, even if he is not always easy to get on with and has had in his time the ordinary differences with family and friends, has the habit of intimate companionship, as well as the need for that more general communication with his kind which is natural to the human animal. In that case the first of this man's difficulties when he finds himself alone will be the most obvious: it will seem very strange to him, not to say painful, to have no one with whom to exchange small talk about daily and domestic affairs, no one with whom to share his board and his bed, no one with whom, in a word, he can communicate. This is for anyone a greater deprivation than those who have not experienced it might think, while for certain natures it may at first seem well-nigh intolerable.

But suppose also that this particular man is fortunate in having certain positive advantages, even what now presents itself to him as some degree of training for the solitary life; for indeed it is probable that our fate, or our guardian angel, or our own inward resources, or whatever we may believe in as that which shapes our ends, while it may ask much of us, never asks more of us than we are ultimately

capable of bearing, and asks it for a hidden purpose which in time may be declared. This man, then, is not without a certain philosophy; nor is he without that religious sensibility which (he would say) cannot be divorced from philosophy. He believes at least that "there is more in life than living," and that some of his past experiences have proved to him that this is so, past experiences not only of people and his relations with them, but of works of nature on the one hand and of art on the other. Finally we may suppose him to have yet another advantage, closely connected with his religious sensibility and his appreciation of nature and the arts, in that he is himself what is called a creative person. Whatever else he has lost, that is to say, he still has his work, and this is something which, while he has few illusions about its worth, he has for a long time suspected of being more important than himself and his personal life; and because this man is an artist it is in some sense true that he has already the habit of living, within himself, the solitary life.

Now, however, it is not only his inward life, but his outward one which is solitary, and his difficulty is to adjust himself to it, to learn to manage those practical aspects of his daily existence which hitherto others have managed for him. He must learn, for instance, to keep house, to wash and mend his clothes, to go to market and to cook his meals. Yet it will not be long before he finds himself observing, behind these very ordinary activities, many unexpected things, some of them connected with his own nature. When he is learning to cook, for example, it is certain aspects of memory which surprise him. As a child, more than forty years ago, he used to watch his mother while she worked in the kitchen. He had forgotten this, and would have said that, where cooking was concerned, he scarcely knew how to boil an egg. But, faced with the necessity of making his own meals, he begins to remember, and with extraordinary ease and clarity, many of the things his mother used to do, sometimes even to the smallest detail. Other memories, and not only to do with cookery now, begin to come back to him from his childhood. He begins to think more intensely of his mother than he has done for many years — of the kind of woman she was and of several aspects of his past relationship with her — and in some curious sense his mother begins to live again; first in this simple matter of cooking, and then in other ways, she lives again in him. He begins to understand how much she taught him, and to accord her a degree of gratitude which he never felt, years ago, when he took her care of him for granted. In this connection, and in others to do with his new way of life, he sees the past afresh, and himself in it, and begins to learn a little self-knowledge

which is altogether salutary.

To keep to the simple example of the preparing of meals, there are other things that the solitary man may come to understand in that connection. One of them is that the making of meals is something which should be done for others, and is, like any other art, a means of communication between person and person. It should be done *con amore,* with the object of giving pleasure; it is the *con amore* which gives good food much of its goodness, its virtue and nourishment. To prepare food only for oneself is a sad business; it is one of the solitary man's ways of talking to himself. Yet, even here something further can perhaps be seen: that it is necessary to learn to love and serve ourselves as well as others; loving one's neighbour as oneself implies this, after all. Getting one's own meals may come to show that love for oneself can be objective, humorous and without illusion, and so something quite other than self-love.

There is real suffering to be endured in the experience of living alone; but it will soon begin to be apparent that much of what the lonely man thinks he suffers is unreal. The very phrase "living by himself" is revealing. He is indeed living by himself, at his own side, in his own company; and when no one else is there day by day and week by week a man has many opportunities — indeed he can scarcely avoid them — of getting to know himself, of looking at himself, conversing with himself, and tolerating himself. In more normal circumstances we make others our looking-glasses, and make them distorting ones, seeing in them only those aspects of ourselves which we wish to see. When we are alone there are no such glasses in which to see ourselves darkly; we are face to face with ourselves. In that light it becomes possible for the solitary man to see that much of what he thinks he is suffering is in reality temptation: the temptation to self-pity, the temptation to blame others for his condition, to resent others for leaving him alone; even the temptation to hate death, the kindest of man's friends, for causing his former companions to desert him.

There are times when the man who has no one standing between him and himself dislikes himself very much. All too easily he can take advantage of his situation to indulge a hundred small selfishnesses, to be lazy, to be wasteful of time and energy, to neglect those household goods — chairs and tables, pots and pans — whose patient existence is all for his service. The time may come, however, when he wakes up to their goodness, sees how beautiful is their humility, and acknowledges that they deserve his gratitude and care. Likewise he wakes up at moments to the realization

that the bird on the tree outside his window is not only a bird, but a marvel, and that so are the flowers in his garden and the seasons changing around him. Such small gifts of awareness may bear him towards a deepening of his emotional life, and that in turn towards a deepening and widening of his inward life as a whole. Blake called experience transformed into imagination "the poetic vision," and Coleridge "the shaping spirit." The man who lives alone listens to music with new ears.

That which is real in his suffering now begins, as most real suffering will in time, to show itself as a blessing in disguise; for without experience of suffering no one can learn to be compassionate. A man who experiences the suffering of loneliness and passes through it towards the imaginative condition may come to understand the loneliness of others, of many old persons, for instance, or of neglected children. It is a strange thing that we must experience a particular kind of suffering ourselves before we can know fully what it means to others. "Men learn little from others' experience," but they learn all that is worth knowing from their own. And compassion is not only one of the few kinds of knowledge worth knowing; it is like the grain of mustard seed in the parable. Though it may begin to grow from suffering of a particular kind, and embraces first others' suffering of the same kind, it does not stop there. Compassion understands the world as "a vale of soul-making" which is by its very nature a vale of tears, and life in the world as by its very nature painful, if only because it is an exile from another and more real world; so that a man who has begun to be compassionate will scarcely be able to read his daily newspaper without the impulse to weep for the human condition, and then to make some attempt to alleviate it.

It would be strange, however, if in a country as populous as Britain physical loneliness were not relative. Those who were formerly his companions by kindred or affinity may no longer be with him, but there are still men and women not far from the solitary man's doorstep, and he is likely to seek them out; indeed in the earlier phases of his new kind of life the alternative to doing so may well appear to be suicide, so deeply ingrained in us in our instinctive gregariousness. Suppose, for instance, that he goes to the village pub, if not to drown his sorrows in beer, then for the simple sake of being with other human beings; for, as there is more in life than living, so there is more in pubs than drinking; further, there is more in the presence of the human herd than the animal's need for its kind. The human herd is made up of individuals, and each of these — the discovery is still astonishing, however often it is made — is a man created in God's image. Each individual is a fallen creature

now, like the lonely man himself, but still a creature dimly remembering Eden; beyond man's inhumanity to man the brotherhood of man persists, a rediscoverable reality once the imagination is engaged; and where the brotherhood of man becomes manifest so does the fatherhood of God.

It is a curious thing that when we attempt to choose our own friends we often choose the wrong ones and choose them for the wrong reasons, perhaps because they flatter us by reflecting only those aspects of ourselves which we wish to see. When our friends are chosen for us by circumstances beyond our control they tend to be friends of a different kind, and friends perhaps on another level. We needs must love them (if we can love them at all) for what they are, not for what we want them to be, and they needs must love us (if they can love us at all) for what we are, not for what we think ourselves to be. The society at the village pub is unlikely to be interested in the labels which life sticks to a man's outside, in "a garage-mechanic" or "an author" or even the local schoolmaster, sexton or roadman; it is interested in Tom and Dick and Harry as persons. Nor is it interested in the lonely man because he is lonely; it is interested in him. And for this reason the miracle happens: behold, he is no longer lonely, and men are his friends whom he would never have expected to be his friends. This begins to tell him something new about the real nature of relationship, and that it has little to do with common tastes, similar education, the accent in which a man speaks or the social stratum from which he comes.

It is probably the case, however, and in spite of what we may think, that we have very little choice, whether of our companions or of any other of our circumstances. We think that it is we who live our lives, but in reality it is our lives which live us; we are bound by habits, by associations whether of ideas or feelings, and by early and later training: fallen man is not a free man. Things happen to him, and most of them are accidents; he can rarely be said to have a destiny, for this is possible only where accident is transcended in intention, which in turn is possible only where fallen man begins to be redeemed by his own efforts to attain a new kind of understanding of himself and of his world.

In the meantime it seems that we attract to ourselves, unknowingly, involuntarily, certain experiences, some kinds to one man, other kinds to another. Life in the world being what it is, many experiences are painful; yet it is sometimes possible to see, usually after the event, that they come to us for a purpose. If that purpose can be discerned, there is meaning in our experiences, and this meaning, it then appears, was

understood in advance by something in us which is more intelligent than we are and knows what is ultimately for our good. To be "alone in the world" appears at first to be as bad an experience as any of the ills the flesh is heir to; but apart from the fact that we may have deserved, by our behaviour in the past, to be made to live alone (and few of us, after all, really deserve to be lived with), it is an experience which can be used, in a great many ways, for the only real purpose which life holds, a purpose of which that something more intelligent in us never loses sight: the enhancement of our consciousness, first, about ourselves, and then, and therefore, about others and about our world as a whole; for we are potentially more than ourselves, as others and the world are more than they seem. Just as there is more in life than living, so there is more in loneliness than living alone. Besides, some men have withdrawn from their daily and domestic lives deliberately, feeling the need at a certain stage of their existences to enrich their inner and contemplative lives. Perhaps it was that something more intelligent in the solitary man of whom we are speaking that, however little the man himself may have thought so at the time, chose his loneliness for him.

Besides again, for the man who has some kind of creative work to do, to be "alone in the world," stripped (it seems) of everything but his work, has its own meaning. Why did he previously suspect that he had no other use than that of being at the service of something more important than himself? Now that he is by himself, suspicion may become conviction, and the purpose of his loneliness plain: perhaps he has been set free; perhaps he begins to think with joy and humility of the most solitary, but most creative, years of other artists, such as Beethoven, whose lonely suffering has perished, but whose music we still hear as the trumpets sounding for him in the celestial city.

R. H. WARD

IN FACT, all the external world, as we know it, is always a result. Our causes are concealed, and mankind becomes to us a mass of contending unrelated effects. It is the effort to relate the effects conveniently without touching, without (often) understanding, the causes that makes life difficult.

—CHARLES WILLIAMS

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK

[It is with regret that we announce the passing of the writer of this fine essay, written with a warm and generous feeling. As Sramanera Jivaka the late **Getsung Lobzang Jivaka** contributed to our pages several reflective articles based on the Buddha's teaching; for, born in an English body, at a young age he found his spiritual place among the learners and preachers of the Buddha's *Dhamma*. In this article he writes of the gentle teaching and gentle life of Guru Nanak, tracing especially the close parallels to the teachings of the Christ and the Buddha. For reasons of space, we have been compelled to omit a few passages of narrative interest, but in respect of Guru Nanak's doctrines and the author's reflections the article stands as it was written by its late author.—Ed.]

For some strange reason of all the great Teachers who have come to guide humanity, only Guru Nanak, the Founder of the Sikh Religion, is almost unknown to the English-speaking world, and how much more so is the nature of his Teaching! For the change that transformed the doctrine of peace and brotherly love made the followers of the gentle Nanak into a martial race with a reputation and honour of its own, and caused his high set of values to be debased by a more worldly one. What was the nature of the Dharma he preached? What was the character of the Master himself? And how did the change occur? From the very few books in the English language about Sikhism,[1] the story can be pieced together.

Nanak was born in 1469 A.D. at a time of universal strife in India, when the Hindus were being massacred by the Moghuls and the Buddhists had already diasppeared through the ferocity of Moslem fanaticism. As with other Master-Teachers the story of his first day at school is one of his confounding the schoolmaster by his innate insight and there is no record of his ever having had very much education. Indeed, later in life the Brahmans are for ever taunting him with his lack of reading and inability to recite the Vedas, although he can silence them each time with his ready answers.

In his teens he had already shown his contempt of the outward symbols of the religion into which he had been born when he refused to allow

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[1] My thanks are due to Shri B. P. L. Bedi for permission to quote freely from his book *Guru Nanak* (Unity Publishers, A3 Hazrat Nizamuddin Extension, New Delhi) which, so far as I know, is the only one in the English language which gives an account of the life and work of the Guru. Also see *Transformation of Sikhism* by Narang.—G.L.J.

the sacred thread to be tied on his arm on the ground that it was but a piece of cotton spun by man and could be easily broken. He appears to have used this ceremony for the purpose of preaching his first sermon, which is a pattern for many of those that were to follow; for he tells his shocked family and relatives to spin the thread of contentment with the cotton of compassion and to wear it in the mind.

It is the superficiality of religion which seems to have struck him forcibly even in his early youth, and the discord and animosity existing between men, especially between Hindus and Moslems, who, he considered, should live as brothers helping one another and easing each other's sufferings instead of adding to them.

At the instance of his family he married early and for three years he worked as a storekeeper to the local Nawab and while freely distributing his master's stocks he appears to have used supernatural powers to keep the quantity at its proper level while yet satisfying those in need. For throughout his career he seems to have performed more "miracles" than the Buddha and the Christ put together, and his healing miracles resemble those of the latter very closely.

At the end of the three years he resigned his post and announced that he was going to set about his mission in life. He was now just twenty and so, blessing his wife and two infant sons, he departed for that period of solitary meditation that each Master has to go through which involves the last remnants of self-conquest and confirmation of the conviction of his own spiritual destiny. The struggle of the Buddha with Mara and of the Christ with Satan is paralleled in the young Nanak's case It is said that

> thunder, lightning, and myriads of formless, frightful shapes . . . crowded round him, sharpening their five-pointed weapons of passion, anger, greed, delusion and conceit and emitting flames of desire and wilding the double-bladed sword of hate and harmfulness.

At least here the imagery is clear and the personification not left undemonstrated as in the case of the others.

Nanak's ministry began and quickly the title of Guru was applied to him, and quickly too he found what to expect in his hearers. "You consider me mad because I regard as valueless what men like you value," he told one who was unsuccessfully trying to exorcise "the evil spirit" out of him, which he thought was the cause of the Teacher's strange words! And from the beginning he declared himself to be against the labels of religion: "To serve mankind there is no Hindu, there is no

Moslem."

Naturally he antagonized the priests and exponents of both religions and they took him to task, but he had a ready answer: "He who is firm in faith has a right to be called a . . . Moslem . . . freed from the domination of the self, compassionate to all things, such a one may call himself a Moslem"; and he denied that he himself belonged to either religion.

Ritual particularly irked him and in the same manner as he had dealt with the sacred thread he told how worship should be performed with the heart full of the thought of God and a feeling of compassion towards other men. God is a central point in his Teaching, a personal God which the Buddha has denied and which the Christ had taught was like a loving Father. Yet, as will be seen, he seems then to have been talking down to his hearers who believed in one god at least or more, for when he went to Tibet he was able to discuss the Absolute of Buddhism and made no mention of a personal God.

With contempt of ritual went contempt of the religious *convenances*. A *Dewan* once said to him: "You are a strange man; you can eat the food cooked by a Shudra!" A similar remark had once been made to the Christ, who was charged with eating with "publicans and sinners," also social outcasts.

"I have no caste," replied the Guru, "nor do I sit in a *chauka* to eat. For me the whole earth is pure." Naturally too, therefore, he ignored the ban on meat-eating and made the noteworthy remark that "it is more important to banish cruelty from the mind than to abstain from meat-eating," which few can honestly deny.

He, like the Buddha, preached the need of severing connections with the idea of "I" and "I-am-the-doer." Even as a child he appears to have seen that what he terms "I-am-ness" stands in the way of any spiritual evolution. So long as this remains all activity is valueless. "Those who are bound by the chains of attachment," he said to his uncle once, "delude themselves that they are serving others. They serve their own self-interest."

The delusive nature of desire, renunciation of the fruits of action, awareness of the impermanence of all worldly things, were constantly being preached, and above all, the brotherhood of man in a country rent in twain by religious differences and thus rent ever since despite his message:—

> "God is one," say the Moslems. If God is one how can a Hindu not be a brother to a Moslem? But we do not worship God, we worship

that which is untrue and this worship of the unreal is the cause of separation and hate. When we approach God all differences disappear.

Naturally, he had to withstand severe interrogation from time to time by learned Brahmins who regarded him with contempt for his lack of learning, and inevitably the question of the soul and the self and the creation was put to him. His answers are instructive:—

> "Why has the world been created?" asked a disciple.
> "To experience its futility and to discard it," replied the Guru.
> "What is the object of creation?"
> "The body is created only to die. It is the garment of the spirit which must rise out of its imprisoned self into freedom."

Herein is the answer to the question of the purpose for which men are born — for which you and I are born: in order to evolve. The bodily covering is merely the vehicle in which the potential Self can develop, not that imaginary self which the Buddha denied had any permanent reality but the one of which he says strikingly in one place: "Even the getting of a Self, so small as this is not permanent." (*Sam. Nik.*, III, xxii, 96). What we think is our Self is not. What we have to do is to obtain a Self by shedding our*selves* and this can only be done *per corpus* and even then the Self obtained is but a step to another and higher stage of evolution which goes beyond what we can conceive. This Guru Nanak also makes clear when he says: "The divinity of the soul is infinite and beyond the comprehension of human understanding." And he is in full accord with the Buddha in saying: "As long as the sense of self remains, the sense of separateness of the world from Reality does not disappear."

The Guru wandered widely through India and, it is said, as far afield as Tibet, Constantinople and Mecca to the North and West, Ceylon to the South and Cathay to the East, but regrettably few of these travels are recorded or documented in the English language.

He performed many miracles and by his healing touch "the blind received their sight, the lame walked, and the lepers were cleansed." Apparently, he had all the psychic powers of a highly trained *yogi* innate in him, for he received no training. Indeed *yogis*, regarding him as a promising youth, often offered patronizingly to teach him their lore.

One such Yogi wanting him for a disciple said: "Only Yogis know how to span the ocean of life," to which the Guru replied: "Do they? There is only one way to cross the ocean of life and that is to let the self die while living," and then added, "The real mark of a disciple is

that amidst a sea of desires he is desireless." To another who offered to teach him the secret of living for centuries he remarked that such an offer was scarcely attractive in this world of suffering.

Guru Nanak was not an advocate of the *sanyasin* life, but lived and taught that method which, in modern times, has been stressed by Gurdjieff and named the Fourth Way, the way of the householder who is in the world and yet not of it. "The vesture of the body and the symbols of denomination are of no account, nor does Desire die with leaving a household." The inner change, the true conversion, can take place anywhere, more likely under the stress and strain of the performance of a householder's ordinary duties, which constantly call for self-denials, than by abandoning the school of life and wandering into the desert lands of self-glorification.

But family ties and affections are a fetter because the personal love of friend or kin is in fact but a reflection of self-love. Compassion towards all is the faculty to be developed. When we mourn for the loss of a loved one we are really indulging in self-pity for our loneliness. This same point Plato made fifteen hundred years before — in the *Phaedo* — but no one has ever listened to him. And for book learning Nanak had little use, and the quotations of the *pandits* left him unmoved. "Nanak says only one word is of account, all else is for the glory of the Self." And that word, of course, was *OM*.

The Tibetans have a popular belief that Guru Nanak was the reincarnation (or *Tulku*) of their own Padmasambhava, the great exponent of Tantric Buddhism who overcame the Bon priesthood at its own game of miracle-making and so established Buddhism in Tibet in the eighth century. Not all, however, accept this theory; some say that because he acquired the title of Guru Rimpoche, by which Padmasambhava is also known, a confusion has arisen.

Be that as it may, Guru Nanak in the course of his travels came to Srinagar and from there walked to Ladakh and finally on to Tibet. It seems that the Kushok or Head Lama of a Ladakhi monastery welcomed and entertained him and then accompanied him on his pilgrimage to Lake Mansarowar. Their conversation, as recorded, centred upon the Absolute which, Nanak said, is limitless and indescribable. He was no longer talking to people of low education and development who could not go beyond the concept of a personal God made in their own image; he was talking to a Lama whose learning would be extensive. "Limited power of expression comes from the Absolute," he said; "so no one can describe the Absolute. What we must learn is the cure of suffering which

humanity inherits."

The Lama was pleased to be met on his own ground and remarked: "Then the Truth of the Lord Buddha still remains and the knowledge that all beings are tied to the wheel and suffer agonies till they obtain release by following the Eightfold Path." Which shows that by the fifteenth century Ladakh had lost connections with India since the passage of *bhikshus* to and from Tibet had ceased after the devastating persecution two centuries before.

The Guru must have discoursed on similar lines from time to time; for when at Almora a *siddha* asked him: "You talk of a God with personal qualities and also without personal qualities. Can you explain this mystery?" His reply is a classic for all time: "The unchanging Absolute is without qualities and manifests Itself with qualities." Which is as much as to say that our view of it is coloured by the limitations of our minds and the Real is beyond a mind which insists in thinking in terms of subject and object. It is the difference between the Potential and the actual, between the Real and the phenomenal, between *Nirvāna* and *saṁsāra,* all of which, the Mahāyāna philosophers had perceived, were really one and the same viewed with and without the colouring spectacles of the finite mind of man. And elsewhere Nanak says that Truth is higher than God, which is to say that the concept of a God is only a step on the way towards apprehension of the Absolute.

Guru Nanak seems to have been a lovable character and to have had a notable sense of humour. "The Guru laughed." "The Guru burst out into a loud laugh." "The Guru smiled." The sense of humour is evinced in many incidents recorded of him and in many sayings.

Compared with either the Buddha or the Christ the Guru Rimpoche appears to have had an easy life and employed his powers to save himself and inactivate his enemies on more than one occasion. He had no painful illnesses like the Buddha and he died peacefully at the age of seventy, suffering none of the torture the Christ endured. He appears, like other Masters who have not been the victims of man's cruelty, to have been able to order the time of his death when he felt his work was finished.

With him were the two faithful companions of his wanderings, Bala, who was later to record his life and teachings, and Mardana, the minstrel who was always hungry. But to one Lehna he gave the symbols of Guruship to be his successor, passing over his own sons, who never seem to have been numbered among his followers. Lehna, who seems to have been born to that end, nevertheless only met the Guru late in life, a life

that had been one of persistent self-conquest in order to fit himself for the unknown task that was to be his.

With a large concourse of Sikhs who had gathered from far and near at Kartarpur as the news had spread that their Master intended to leave the world, he prepared for death. He adjured them to live up to what he had taught.

> "Most people profess to love others" [he said], "but they only love their own selves, a few those who love them, but a true devotee of the Guru, a Sikh, must love all, even those who hate him. . . . A sikh of the Guru must serve friends and foes alike, knowing that it is only thus he can serve God.

His death follows the pattern of the great Tibetan Bodhisattvas such as Milarepa and others of his standing:—

> The Guru fell into a trance. When he came out of the trance he saw his two sons were weeping. He consoled them. . . . Then the Guru drew a white sheet over him. Flowers dropped from the heavens and celestial music was heard.

And significantly and to the eternal discredit of man: "immediately a dispute arose between the Hindus and Moslems," the one wanting to cremate, and the other to bury, the body. "But when they lifted the sheet the body of the Guru was not there!" In Tibetan tradition the body of a Buddha or great Bodhisattva dematerializes rapidly. (Incidentally this explanation has never been applied to the body of the Christ, which had vanished from the tomb by the third day.)

At the time of his death in 1538 A.D., Guru Nanak had acquired many thousands of followers from the Hindu community. Guru Angad, as Lehna was named by Nanak, now perceived that unless there was some organization they would quickly lapse back; for they had scarcely been weaned from the ancestral habits of a lifetime. Somehow they must be made distinct. With this end in view he invented a new script, the Gurumukhi alphabet, in which he had all that was known of the Guru's life and teaching written down. This meant that all who learned the letters could read, in their own Punjabi language, the scriptures of the new religion: no longer were Brahmans, educated in Sanskrit, alone to have the prerogative of learning. He also started a free kitchen so that the Sikhs could practise the art of helping and giving, by labour or money, to serve the poor.

The third Guru, Amar Das, organized the now many hundreds of thousands of followers into twenty-two parishes as it were, each with

its guardian-overseer, and under him building was encouraged and the foundations of the great city of Amritsar were laid.

The fourth Guru Arjun Dev, primarily a scholar, but by circumstances driven into the political arena, had the *Adi Granth* compiled, which was to be the complete Sikh Bible and which included his own writings and those of the preceding Gurus, as well as the results of an intensive research into all Guru Nanak had taught. And in his lifetime Amritsar became a city and the famous Golden Temple was completed, so that now the Sikhs had also a centre of pligrimage to vie with Mecca and Varanasi. But the first signs of persecution were also at hand and Arjun Dev was the first to be martyred by torture, for his faith, in 1606 A.D.

The rest of the history is of how the Sikhs became a race apart and acquired a military reputation. Persecution as savage as any that had been dealt out to Buddhist or Hindu became their lot, and even children were numbered among the martyrs. Thousands perished but thousands more were won to the new faith which was already drawing away from the universal love preached by the Guru. Under the fifth Guru, Har Govind, the conversion to arms began, and a new race was born that quickly acquired characteristics utterly unlike those of the Hindu community from which it sprang. But it was the tenth and last Guru, Govind Singh, who finally established the new nation and gave it a uniform in the shape of the uncut hair and beard, the steel bangle and the sword. And the uniform produced the needed feeling of unity and difference, while he sword was to become the symbol of the Sikhs and to give them the world-wide reputation they have as a martial race. He died in 1708 A.D. and the Guruship ended.

But what has become of the Teachings of the gentle Guru Nanak, that the war-torn world outside India has not read them and scarcely even knows his name?

GETSUL LOBZANG JIVAKA

THE MYSTIC

Reason he has more strongly than others:
Truth has ordained him her forwardest child;
Though Patience he courts his zeal is unstayed:
To Peace is he come, to Love reconciled.

WILLIAM EWART WALKER

THE IMAGE OF VIOLENCE

[Our old and esteemed friend, **Mr. George Godwin,** is actively and humanely concerned with such contemporary problems as the colour question, nuclear disarmament and many others. He writes with information and compassionate calmness on a difficult problem: that of violence by youthful groups. He is surely right in linking such manifestations to the constant silent influence of images of violence through books, films, and television; and there is wisdom in the suggestion of such an educationist as Dr. Kurt Hahn that in offering worthy goals to restless energy must lie the real solution. We cannot purify others by force; but we will not appeal in vain from the Philip drunk of distorted emotions to the Philip sober of the real human soul imbedded in all — in all — human minds.—Ed.]

The point of departure for any attempt to discover the root causes of the post-war phenomenon of violence need take the enquirer no further afield than what is reported with sickening regularity in his daily newspaper.

Let me take what lies nearest at hand, the daily press for the 27th of April of this year, and see what sort of image a stranger from another planet might get of our "civilization" from such reading.

The two newspapers from which the following brief quotations are taken are *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mail,* which between them enclose a large journalistic bracket.

The Guardian report is headed " 'Gang warfare and law of the jungle' in London."

The facts disclosed in the report that follows this heading, shortened, follow.

> On April 4th, in Finchley, North London, fourteen youths, known as the "Mussies" (being from Muswell Hill, a North London suburb) broke into the St. Barnabas Youth Fellowship Hall and did serious physical damage to a former rival gang, the Finchley Gang, at that time well on the way to decent behaviour. Those concerned now await trial at the Old Bailey.

Now, affrays between rival gangs of boys (who at that age level tend to combine in gangs) are no new thing, nor peculiar to England. What here has to be noted is the change in the character of these affrays. Once fists served the purpose of the contestants. Now knives, bicycle chains and "coshes" and nail-studded boards are among the usual weapons.

Prosecuting counsel in this case described this assault as one carried out like an organized military operation; and that point is important for any attempt to examine the character of this case — but one of many similar. What in colloquial terms might be styled "a rough-house" or "free for all" has become far more sinister in such cases as that mentioned, because of the element of premeditation.

The report of this case in the *Daily Mail* differs little from that in the *Guardian,* but adds the details that make the picture more easily visualized. Here we have a report which tells of screaming girls, of boys knifed with bayonets and nailed wooden clubs, and this report makes it quite clear that those assaulted were taken by surprise while quite innocuously engaged.

A reader might well be forgiven for objecting, "But a single case of this sort is insufficient ground for any generalization concerning modern youth." And that would, indeed, be true enough. But the facts are otherwise.

Here is another report. It is from the *Daily Mail,* April 26th: "Save us from teenage mob, say angry villagers to M.P."

This time the show of violence took place on the Isle of Sheppey. A single short paragraph from the report of this affray yields all that is necessary for the purpose of this article:—

> Six people were beaten up when about 1,000 teenage boys and girls invaded a village during the week-end, a protest meeting was told last night.

In this case there was a rough demand for drinks, after hours, and on meeting with a refusal, the violence referred to above.

It would weary the reader if one cited further cases, though this would be easy enough, and so melancholy a chronicle would include a heartless, brutal murder of a harmless youth by a gang of youths.

But what the sociologist, the psychologist and the ordinary citizen have to find out are the root causes which transform teen-age boys and girls into hooligans, the two end-objects of whose anti-social behaviour are acts of violence and acts of completely purposeless destruction.

The writer certainly has no easy, ready-made answer to this great social problem, but there are factors that suggest causes peculiar to our time. Two occur to the writer. First, radical cultural changes, the chief of which is the visual image of violence as projected, day by day, on television. Secondly, the social changes, including racial and class antagonisms. But there is also a third element that may well be playing a

greater role than has yet been recognized, save by a very few percipient social thinkers.

Among these is Dr. Kurt Hahn, the founder of Gordonstoun, the school to which the Prince of Wales is to go from his Preparatory School. Dr. Hahn, if I understand his point of view and argument aright, sees as a major cause of juvenile delinquency our failure to harness energies in the right direction. During a recent talk on the B.B.C. Dr. Hahn made the following points, and they are well worth considering when the problem of mob violence in youth is under consideration:—

> I regard it as the supreme task of education to help the young to achieve a balance of power in their inner life so that the love of man can take charge. Is this possible against the background of modern society? The young today are exposed to six declines: the decline in fitness, due to modern ways of moving about; the decline in skill and care, due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship; the decline of self-discipline, due to the ever-present availability of tranquillizers and stimulants; the decline in initiative and enterprise, due to the wide-spread disease of spectatoritis; the decline in memory and imagination, due to the confused restlessness of our civilization; neither the love of man nor the love of God can take deep root except in aloneness; the worst decline, the decline in compassion, due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted.

If I understand Dr. Hahn aright, he sees this problem as one of *harnessing energies*; which diagnosis takes us naturally to the next objective, the harnessing of these energies, now so frequently discharged by acts of criminal violence, to a *moral purpose*. And the moral purpose Dr. Hahn suggests is that latent capacity for what is heroic and selfless which exists in all but a few.

How is this to be achieved? At Gordonstoun surplus energy that, lacking direction, can become criminal activity, or, at least, anti-social behaviour, is converted into activities that have a moral value. And the chief of these may be summed up, quite simply, as opportunity to exercise the instinct for social service. Let me quote Dr. Hahn again on this point:—

> At Gordonstoun we have four voluntary rescue services: the Coastguards, the Fire Service, the Mountain Rescue Unit, and the Surf Life Savers. He who drills and labours, accepts boredom and danger, all for the sake of being ready to help his fellow men, often discovers God's purpose in his inner life; and he flares up in holy anger when he encounters the contempt for human life and human dignity.

Now, suddenly and disconcertingly, one is conscious that the blame seems to be shifting from our delinquent youth to those who sit in judgment upon them. One has to ask, if one would be honest, what is the justification for the stressing, by the printed word, or TV, of acts of violence, and what the consequences?

If the image of violence is divested of its odium, then it is converted into the pseudo-heroic; and the spectacle of combat between contestants battering each other or killing by shooting, becomes acceptable to the mind of youth not yet mature enough to apply valid moral values to what is portrayed.

All children and young people are imitative. They are also unconsciously influenced by the example of their elders. A letter to the *Guardian,* of recent date, makes the point. "Why is it that the widely held theory that children learn by example can be applied to parents, road drill, and smoking, but apparently not to violence on television?"

Another correspondent in the same newspaper, commenting on the wide-spread criticism of the murder scene in *Oliver Twist,* recently the subject of a fine broadcast, takes another point of view. It is Sir John Wolfenden, writing in *The World's Children*:—

> Westerns share with historical costume plays the status of being possibly real but outside the child's own experience. This degree of unreality makes them, for all practical purposes, aseptic. . . . A child who watches such programmes, whether presented in drama or in pictures or in debate, is given a picture of the adult world which inevitably stresses disagreement, conflict and often, violent solution. The same is true . . . of magazines, newspapers and films.

In the main, this may be accepted as a fair assessment. The writer, however, does not touch on some of the consequences of a surfeit of violence, visually portrayed, such, for example, as the recent case of a boy who hanged himself after seeing a TV picture of that act.

If the visual image has powers of evil over youth, so, as the writer just quoted affirms, has the printed word.

In New York, where gang warfare between local youths and Puerto Rican boys ended in murder, the circumstances were the subject of an investigation by Dr. Fredric Wertham, a leading psychiatrist. Dr. Wertham was concerned with the question of the sanity or otherwise of the boy Santana, the leader of a gang formed originally for protection against a gang of New York youths who made a practice of beating up Puerto Ricans.

After one interview Dr. Wertham asked the accused boy if he would

like him to bring something on his next visit. "Bring me some creeps," replied the boy.

"Creeps," one should add, are magazines that specialize in all manner of horrors and abnormalities, and they are sold freely through the United States, though now prohibited in England.

Dr. Wertham is asking questions of the boy in the prison cell, awaiting trial.

"What do you read?"

"Funny books. Creeps."

"What other books do you read?"

"I don't read other books."

"Never?"

"No, I only read the creeps."

"Tell me about that."

". . . . In New York I read a lot. I used to have a closet full. . . ."

"What was the largest number you had at one time?"

"Two hundred or three hundred."

So the interrogation goes on, until it is plain that the only influence on this lad's empty mind was an evil influence.

Such magazines as those referred to were until a few years ago circulating in vast quantities in England. Of them, the late Lord Jowitt said in the House of Lords: "Never in my life have I come across more disgraceful, more discreditable and more abominable publications than these horror comics."

Thus we find complete agreement between the English educationist, Sir John Wolfenden, and the New York psychiatrist, Dr. Fredric Wertham. And thus, as the title of Dr. Wertham's study of delinquent youth in New York has it, we have "The Circle of Guilt." A civilization gets the quality of youth it deserves.

May I be personal for a moment?

As a child I learned to swim soon after I learned to walk. As a boy I nourished two ambitions, one purposeless, the other very much worth while. I wanted to swim the English Channel — at that time a feat performed by only one swimmer, Captain Webb —but I never did or even ever tried.

The other ambition, likewise, alas, never gratified, was to save a drowning person. But though I have often read of bathers drowning for lack of a rescuer, Fate has never granted to me this lifelong ambition.

Now, in the minds of many boys and youths ambitions like those of my own youth remain as phantoms of a heroism latent in the great

majority of youths of both sexes. And thinking along these lines while writing now I found myself imagining a situation that would illustrate this strange ambivalence in all of us.

We imagine a gang of "Mussies" setting out armed with flick knives, broken bottles and so forth to wage war on the Finchley Gang. They are on their way, keen for battle. But suddenly a cry is heard from an orphanage. It is on fire. The children within are in danger of being burnt to death in their beds.

What, then, might be the response of the gang on its way to battle?

I think it quite probable that a whole set of impulses would take over and that the potential wagers of street war might very easily become a group of courageous rescuers, covering themselves, not with blood, but with glory.

Is the idea no more than romantic? I do not think so.

This is the cure prescribed by Dr. Kurt Hahn. It is the substitution of a good end-object for a bad one; a switching of energy from evil to good.

It is an old dictum that a country gets the government it deserves. And it is suggested here that it also gets the quality of youth it deserves.

Let me end with a final quotation from Dr. Kurt Hahn:—

> A call could go out to the young to help in the fight against pointless death, to schools to make room in their timetable for first-aid and bronze-medallion training, to rescue organizations to trust the competence and dedication of teenagers. . . . I am thinking of Voluntary Service Overseas, and of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Outward Bound, and of Kennedy's Peace Corps; of youngsters sacrificing their spare time to help the sick, the old and the blind, and German boys working in Coventry in the service of expiation.

Instead of the all-pervading image of violence of our time, violence in the visual image, in the printed word, in the international preoccupation with diabolical instruments of wholesale death, somehow youth must be given leadership based on an appeal to latent creative capacity; for he who makes does not destroy. We have to replace the evil image of violence of our age with creative purpose. How this may be best done is, I think, indicated clearly by Dr. Kurt Hahn and those educationists who think along similar lines.

GEORGE GODWIN

THE TWO SIDES OF DEMOCRACY

[**Mr. E. W. Martin** is a student of history and social processes who has contributed some thoughtful articles to our pages. He himself explains in his article how the theme of his book *The Tyranny of the Majority* seemed to demand a study of "regional forms of democratic culture" to complement it. Some of his results are illustrated in this interesting article.—ED.]

FOR MANY YEARS I have been specially concerned with the history and theory of democracy. It has seemed to me that as there are so many Marxist theorists there should also be those who are specially qualified to write and speak about the essentials of democracy.

In 1961 I published a book entitled *The Tyranny of the Majority*. In it I attempted to show that there was a difference between the "majority" and the "mass." The majority in Britain consisted of middle-class people who had taken over most of the power once held by a small group of leading families. The mass was made up of people who were ruled, persuaded and directed by the managers and manipulators.

My central proposition was that in Britain, as in most other democratic societies, a "majority régime" had been established. Mass society was pushing everybody toward materialism, toward a worship of technical efficiency and commercial success, and a struggle was in process between the ruling majority and the no longer wholly inactive or acquiescent mass.

Mass democracy is generally taken to mean that climate in which hierarchies conflict with masses, as happens when certain business groups attempt to impose their ideas on the mass of the people by advertising and propaganda. It is dangerously easy, on this ground, to give the impression that life in Britain is full of conscious pressure. This is not so at all. The pressure is a social and almost unconscious process where rival institutions struggle for power.

In that book, therefore, I had been considering the national, and to some extent the universal meaning of democracy. But I was aware that in Britain this national image of democracy was associated with regional forms of democratic culture about which most people knew very little.

I had the opportunity to study the history and social life of one rural community in my county of Devon, situated in a pleasant part of southern England. Here it was necessary not to theorize but to see in what way democracy was actually working, to understand how small groups of people in a small town and its twenty or so villages managed

to live and work as a natural community.

Culture is made up of two strands, the universal and the local. I believed that without a local culture there could be no thriving national culture. So my aim in conducting a long survey was to see what had happened to an agricultural community from 1800 to the present time. It was, in many ways, an exciting task. I had to consult local records, to see how the Poor Law had affected rural workers, to get a knowledge of the culture on which villagers had lived and thrived for generations, and to get some idea of the economic life.

The society I was studying could be split up into two parts. It was possible to cut this seamless coat of history by following the line etched into human lives by the great war of 1914 to 1918. Before that time the villages of Devon had been controlled by landowners, squires, men of leisure and substance who were the rulers of villages. Their power came from land, from property and from the prestige which they had inherited. All this records proved abundantly.

It was not so easy to find out what had happened in the minds of people. How, for instance, did the ordinary worker of today differ from the labourer of 1800 or 1850? I found that the old labourers had no vote until 1874; and the borough or small town which was the centre of my researches had been dominated up to 1831 by a patron who had the town corporation in his pay. So it became clear that not until the beginning of the twentieth century were ordinary citizens able to take a real part in the life of their own area. The country council was established in 1881; and in 1894 there were parish councils, but these institutions were controlled by the men of property and power. They were not instruments of democracy because the ordinary citizen was not ready to profit from legislation.

Rural workers had to be fit to vote, to govern and to act. This was to take generations. But the important point was that, as changes took place at the political and economic level, so the power of middle-class people increased. Gradually leadership changed from a personal output of power into a collective authority. Whereas in the past one or two families had governed a village now power seceded from them. It passed into the hands of farmers and business men.

In this part of England the minority had held power until about 1918; and then, as estates were broken up and wealth dissipated, so new men came into the council chambers and on the committees. The old system, based on custom and prestige, was giving way to another system based on knowledge and power. In the local sense, democracy

moved more slowly than in the national context. Inevitably, however, the national ideas began to react forcibly on local ideas.

The fabric of local democracy did not rest only on the local council, the centres of regional government. It was related also to education, to churches and chapels. In 1870 an act was passed which put elementary education on a new footing. Previously the effort had been voluntary and now it became the business of the State to ensure that children got a minimum of training. This educational process became really operative after about 1902, and the teacher had the opportunity of influencing parents as well as of educating children.

Religious life also altered. The conflict between different kinds of organized religious belief lessened. Ministers of various denominations did not wish to be critical of each other.

As I examined the many strands of life which made up the total of local democracy it was clear that in the reshuffle which followed after the first world war the minority, the landowners and gentlemen, retreated. Once their wealth declined and their estates dwindled they could no longer depend on the allegiance of farmers and workers. This does not mean, however, that local democracy is of exactly the same quality or pattern as national democracy.

Country people, living in villages or hamlets, tend to be conservative in their attitudes. They do not share all the interests or all the aspirations of urban people. The revolution in transport has had an effect on isolated groups of people who now tend to cut themselves off from the local culture which was kept alive until about the nineteen-twenties. Old customs, old crafts, dialect, superstitions, rituals do not die out rapidly. They adhere, limpet-like, to the surface of life.

What seemed to me most important of all the facts arising out of these studies is that the two sides of democracy act and react on each other. The ideas of national democracy are now able to penetrate into all localities through the various councils, committees and organizations which are engaged in organizing and explaining basic ideas. The national movement sets an ideal for society. This ideal is nurtured and brought into bloom regionally.

The struggle taking place between what is national and what is local helps to give any nation its character. To suspend, or to render a culture uniform in all its parts, would mean that the mass communication of ideas could deaden reactions to environment. The local culture of the past was a violent reaction to the stresses of environment. Possibly the affluent society will tend to create conditions which do not produce

violent reactions.

However we may choose to look at democracy, it is always a most complicated process. There are no rules laid down as to what all the elements of democracy may be. In this part of Devon there is now a living democracy because people are less poor, less uncomfortable, less hemmed in by ignorance. They have the chance to be active citizens.

To study a parish is like studying the psychology of a person: the longer one looks and listens the more can be understood. Britain has a great heritage of rural history and literature of which to be proud. That heritage is changing, but it is not being eclipsed.

The local side of democracy is full of pitfalls for the unwary. When we speak of a "democratic culture" it sounds very much up-in-the-air, something that only highbrows bother about. Yet adult education in Britain has to get down to the job of teaching the people of the villages why democracy is worth bothering about, why it is a lifeline for civilization. To graft on to the local culture some of the best of our national ideas ought to be the purpose of the greatest educators, for it is very clear that the kind of poverty against which localities do not legislate is cultural poverty.

A hundred years ago the Devon peasant could not read or write. Today most people can read and write, and yet they are not literate in the real sense. Ideas do not matter very much to them. The cultured middle-class majority can readily impose their wills on members of the working classes. Workers, in fact, are not yet ready to take their part in the process of local government. They have not reached the stage of citizenship.

In many localities the majority dominate the mass. Yet the mass can do much to help themselves if they can muster the will to do so. The struggle in the regions is a replica of the national struggle, moving more slowly and with less intensity of purpose. Business men, professional men and farmers are in a position to dictate policies. They are in positions of authority. Often, however, they do not command the respect of the governed. There is room for much more sociological research, more historical enquiries, more economic study because in Britain the process of social understanding of the rural communities is only just beginning.

In America, rural sociologists and social historians have done an immense amount of work. Most of this remains to be done in Britain. It is important for many reasons, but mainly because historical causes have to be fully understood before serious attention can be paid to current problems.

Of the two sides of democracy, it is likely that regional democracy is the most difficult to comprehend as it is so various. The role of the small community — whether a market town, a village or a hamlet — teaches the student of society something about the weakness and the strength of democracy. Faced with a massive urban growth and a continued rural depopulation, economists and historians and sociologists have to find answers not only to national but to local issues.

My own studies suggest that education of the adult population can help to bring back into their minds an appreciation of past ways of life. It can help them to a scale of values which will not be entirely based on materialism. Neither side of the democratic coin in Britain is dark. Both sparkle with life; and it is this life which offers its challenge to those whose job it is to think seriously about man and society.

E. W. Martin

HORSEMEN

Flushed with the light of early morning sun,
On the horizon suddenly they appear
And revelling in boundless energy
Like sculptures marvellously endowed with life
Beneath a sky that trembles into song
They gallop seaward over wind-swept downs
And vanish with the lightning speed of thought.

Herbert Bluen

ANCIENT INDIAN UNIVERSITIES

[**Shri Shamsuddin, M.A., B.T., M.Ed,** is particularly interested in education and has contributed to many journals on educational topics. In this essay he refers to some of the distinguished efforts of old India in education.—Ed.]

The history of ancient Indian education is taken to extend from 2000 B.C. to 1200 A.D. Ancient India did not have the same characteristics, socially and educationally, throughout this period. Therefore we subdivide it as follows: (I) 2000 to 1000 B.C., the Vedic period; (II) 1000 to 200 B.C., the Upanishadic period; (III) 200 B.C. to 500 A.D., the Dharmashastric period; and (IV) 500 to 1200 A.D., the Pauranic period.

In the Vedic period, society was very simple. Idol worship was unknown. Men and women had equal rights. The caste system had not taken shape. Practically, every one was his own teacher, his own warrior, his own farmer and agriculturist. In the Upanishadic period society began to be divided gradually into groups, and this grouping started with the Vedas. The Dharmashastric period saw a good deal of activity in art, literature, mathematics and dramatics. Sanskrit had become a classical language. The language of popular communication was Prakrit. The caste system had become rigid. Women did not enjoy the same freedom as before. The Pauranic period, really speaking, is the period of the Buddhists so far as education is concerned. The universities of Nalanda and Vikramashila were Buddhistic institutions. Their language was Pali. Institutional education began for the first time in the Pauranic period.

In the schools of ancient India, no student who earnestly desired to be educated was ever disappointed. Teachers did not deliberately hide any technical knowledge from their students. Shukracharya, the preceptor of the Daityas, is represented as having taught to his bitterest enemy's son, Kaca, the art of reviving the dead. In the *Mahabharata*, Drona, the famous archer, could not hide anything he knew of the art of archery from Dhrishtadyumna, though he knew that this disciple would kill him one day.

The *guru* and the pupil lived together. They had the greatest affection for each other; their love was just like the love of father and son. The students used to live in the teacher's house, which was known as the *gurukula*.

In the *gurukula*, the student had to shun all comforts. He had to go to bed after the *guru* in household work, involving even menial duties at times. The life in the *gurukula* was well disciplined, and at times very

hard. From the point of view of needs, both teachers and the taught were satisfied. As the teacher did not live in luxury, neither did he lead a life of want. The problem of indiscipline arose very rarely and, since it was not frequent, punishments were not needed. There was a code for all sorts of activities.

The education provided in universities like Takshashila, Nalanda, Kanchi, Sridhanyakataka, Vikramashila and Banaras was thoroughly liberal. Students were provided with free boarding, lodging and clothing. There was generally a keen competition between the villagers in giving their mite for the village school. Besides this, they donated without hesitation for the benefit of education at times of marriages, thread ceremonies, etc. The teacher not only provided knowledge to the students but also raised funds from the villagers for the benefit of the students. In times of crisis, the *guru* might approach kings with a request to help the *gurukula*. The *guru* did not refuse to teach any student, provided the student was fit to receive instruction.

Their method of teaching was predominantly oral; not merely that, but individual also. Hearing, contemplation and practice were the main features of the method. There were few books; the Vedas were not written. Everything was learnt by heart. Their conviction was: "If knowledge is in books, it is like money lent to others." At a time, the *guru* had fifteen or twenty students and only so much was taught at a time as the pupil could easily learn. Whatever was taught was learnt by the student on the same day. Unless the first lesson was fully learnt no further lesson was given. Sometimes older students were required to teach younger students. The teacher taught the older students at a fixed time of the day, and then the older taught the younger ones at some other time. It was possible, as the number of students and the number of subjects were small. In this way there was an apprenticeship to learning.

Our information regarding Nalanda comes from the Chinese pilgrim, Hsüan Tsang who toured India from 673 to 687 A.D. He stayed at Nalanda for ten years. He copied sacred Buddhist works. According to him, the place was known as Dharmaganj. The University had three big buildings known as Ratnasagar, Ratnadandi and Ratnaranjak. Out of these, the middle one was a nine-storeyed building, housing the library. In all there were eight halls and 300 apartments. Messing was common. In every courtyard there was a well. Rooms were either single-seated or double-seated. Every student had a stone, known as the *chabutra*, to sleep on. In every room there was a place for keeping lamps and books. There was great rush for admission. Not more than three out of ten

succeeded in getting admission. Even then, there were 10,000 students and 1,000 teachers and it continued for more than eight or nine centuries, beginning from the second century A.D. The institution was financed out of grants in the shape of lands. There were as many as two hundred villages assigned by the Gupta kings for the maintenance of the University. Since it was a Buddhistic institution, the head was a monk, and the teachers were *bhikshus*. Strangely enough, the study of Sanskrit was compulsory.

To Indian universities came students from far-off lands like China, Tibet, Java, Sumatra, Korea, Greece, Iran and Arabia to quench their thirst for learning. They stayed in the universities for more than ten years, and specialized in logic, medicine and astronomy. It is quite obvious that the Indian universities must have had a high standard to attract students from foreign lands when facilities for travelling were so meagre. The standard of these universities can be judged from the stay of the famous doctor Jeevaka (who attended on emperors and whose fee was a figure of not less than eight digits) at Takshashila for seven years, specializing in medicine. Even after his long stay, when he left the University, he thought that he was lacking in adequate knowledge of medicine. In those days, theoretical knowledge alone had no value. The doctor with theoretical knowledge alone was regarded as resembling an ass, conscious of the quantity and not the quality of the load on its back.

Practical training in pharmacy and surgery was insisted upon by legislative action before a doctor could set up a practice. Strabo, the Greek historian, has certified the fact that Indians were great physicians and that they were specially good at curing snake-bites. Inexperienced candidates were given practice in surgery, under the most experienced and specialized teachers. Only proficient surgeons were allowed to operate for intestinal displacements, deep cranial abscesses, cataract, hydrocele or the removal of a still-born child from the uterus. The patients were made insensitive to pain by an overdose of wine.

Not only human beings but even animals were given perfect medical aid. For the first time in the history of the world, Ashoka the Great built veterinary hospitals duly equipped with all necessary medicines.

Similarly, ambulance cars were also utilized to remove the injured soldiers from the battlefield. We do not find the name of any such conveyance in European history before the commencement of the Crimean War. Not only this; even the services of Indian doctors like Manaka and others were requisitioned by Khalifa Harun-al-Rashid of Baghdad

when he was seriously ill and Arab physicians had lost all hopes of curing him. After recovery the Khalifa himself requested Manaka to stay with him and translate Ayurvedic works into Arabic. He also desired to invite Indian lady doctors and midwives to write textbooks for his medical colleges.

The Takshashila University was at its zenith as regards medical studies even in the early centuries of the Christian era. Similarly, the famous University of Ujjain had specialists in mathematics and astronomy and was famous for having established a great observatory. In Southern India, there was a famous educational centre at Kanchipuram.

Instances of lifelong *brahmacharya* (celibate life devoted to high learning) were quite common in Nalanda. Megasthenes has quoted instances of Brahmins who studied for as many as forty-eight years. They studied logic, *vyakarana* (grammar) and philosophical subjects.

There were equal opportunities for all. There was no distinction between the rich and the poor. The prince and the peasant got the same kind of education from the same *guru*. The pupilage of Drona and Drupada, in the *Mahabharata,* is a striking example of this type.

To conclude, education was free and broad-based. For the upkeep of the Universities, donations and endowments were made by foreign as well as native rulers. The ultimate aim of education was the emancipation of the soul. "Action is important" was their belief. Action devised by oneself and self-control guide life towards emancipation. Education was influenced by the general principles of life. Learning for base purposes was strictly prohibited. Every individual was induced to serve the community, irrespective of caste or creed, or his needs, like a doctor who, while treating, forgets whether the disease is contagious or whether he will get his fee or not. In convocations, high ideals were insisted upon both in the teacher and the taught. The teachers prayed for the glory of their students so that they might earn good name and fame for themselves as well as for their teachers wherever they went. For such times Yaska had defined a true scholar in the words of the goddess of learning, Saraswati: "Protect me, and I will be thy cherished treasure."

Education was not controlled by any external authority in ancient India. The State did not try to control it. The teachers were free to teach the best they conceived.

SHAMSUDDIN

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

"THE WRITER'S DILEMMA" *

In 1960 the editor of *The Times Literary Supplement* invited ten well-known British writers to answer the question: "What are the limits beyond his own control that threaten the modern writer?" Stephen Spender wrote an introduction and the essays appeared in book form in 1961.

In putting this question the editor, perhaps, sought to measure the effect upon the minds of writers of the threat of the widely-advertised brainwashing techniques and the manipulation of the new media of mass communication.

If he was looking for fear, he failed, for nowhere in these essays is there a trace of fear or even of discouragement. The tone of the writing is sturdily independent. The writers are aware of the danger but unperturbed. They strongly assert their faith in man as man, in the individual as the individual and in the creative miracle that is always possible. Lawrence Durrell says the writer is

> feeble in everything but these intuitions of possible miracles which lie buried and unrealized in every human psyche, out of which one could pattern the real cloth of gold fabric of a possible Way.

In recent years propaganda has so inflated the role of the writer that he has come to be regarded as far more powerful and important than he is or ever has been. With few exceptions writers are, like other artists, singularly inept in dealing with the practical affairs of life. Even the greatest operates in a very limited field. He has only one way of getting closer to his fellow men and that is by getting closer to himself. In the course of his self-exploration he gives his audience a vicarious intuition of a hitherto concealed part of its own nature. The process of growth does not stop with the attainment of physical maturity. It continues on the psychological and spiritual plane. It is this unseen process of growth upon which the artist concentrates, trying to disentangle the various strands within himself and, in so doing, to gain some insight into the inner unfoldment in progress in others also. With the humility and dedicated devotion of a scientist he watches for the first subtle gleam of an inner mutation which may mean miracle. The glimpse is lost for ever if he is disturbed at the critical moment by the ringing of a phone, the shrieking of a radio, the whining of a beggar or a delegation demanding a written statement on the latest international complication. No one would think of disturbing a scientist's labours!

The difficulty is that a writer works with words. This uncomfortable fact exposes him to all sorts of dangers painters and musicians and scientists are safe from. El Greco could paint the portrait of the Grand Inquisitor with impunity. The Inquisitor himself ordered the portrait, was satisfied with it and paid the painter a good price. What the painter had actually done became obvious only to a later and more perceptive generation. The pity of the rejected petition lying at the Inquisitor's feet! The cruelty of the narrow, long, twisted mouth, the fear and suspicion in the eyes! Here we have something no

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* *The Writer's Dilemma.* Essays first published in *The Times Literary Supplement* under the heading "Limits of Control" with an introduction by Stephen Spender. (Oxford University Press, London. 88 pp. 1961. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

writer could have achieved. Could El Greco have accomplished more by publicly resisting the Terror and going to the stake himself?

A writer's words are not necessarily easier to understand than a painter's use of pigment or a musician's use of sound. But more people are conscious of words and use them in their daily life as conventional and useful tools. Their knowledge of their meaning may be general rather than precise but the tendency is to assume that the meaning is plain and that all who run may read.

There is always a time-lag between the creation of a work of art and its general comprehension but the time-lag for the writer is frequently bedevilled by partial and erroneous reading, resulting in misunderstanding and obscurity that is fraught with difficulty.

This obscurity is protective. It permits him to get what he has to say down on paper. But it throws him open to another danger. Unless he has a private fortune he has to turn to other kinds of employment for his livelihood. If writing were a less difficult art, if writers were able easily and quickly to find the right words and the right way to use the right words in order to express the mood, the emotion, the subtle movement of mind and spirit they have detected, giving their time and energy to tasks assigned to them by their employers would not matter so much.

This is a problem which does not seem to exist for these ten British writers. Art, as Tolstoy pointed out, is and has always been the product of self-sacrifice. And today the writer needs greater conscientiousness and force of character than ever before to make the sacrifices his art requires of him. But it would be interesting to compare these essays with a similar set written by artists of other nationalities, writers who have experienced the cruder forms of control in their own persons and watched others succumb.

The epic of the human spirit in our times has yet to be written. Its travail concerns every one of us. Man drops into his place in an unseen four-dimensional web. He is caught up in a delicate tissue of forces in which he assumes his own inevitable place, following the only path, the only orbit, that is open to him: the human world: Civilization. Outside it he ceases to be human.

Gerald Heard rather smugly states that man cannot be conditioned permanently. A human child brought up by a wolf is permanently conditioned to wolf situations. No wolf boy yet discovered has been able to develop or recover his human powers to the extent that would enable him to live as a moderately intelligent human being.

One of the most pathetic things about us human beings is our touching belief that there are times when the truth is not good enough for us, that it can and must be improved upon. Sitting in the lap of the civilization to which we owe our human status, we rail against it in a manner that can only be described as irresponsible, immature and childish. It is the very truth we deny that so tenderly and forgivingly picks up the fragments and puts them together again.

The systems of special inherited impulses and inhibitions into which we are born form a complex which is carefully computed and self-regulating. Unless the feeling of responsibility that must go with this complex is developed to an adequate degree, the inhibitions without which our race must perish by virtue of its own monstrous aberrations will not be strong enough to steer us safely around them. The magnitude of the obstacles being thrown in man's way is the measure of the strength needed to overcome them.

Writers have a triple responsibility. As men they share the human predicament with all other men. As artists, they share with all other artists the problems of those dedicated to creative activity. As workers with words they share with all users of language the problems of

using it as a precision instrument which accurately records the movements of the growing point of the human spirit.

The appalling fact remains that in the world today there is only one international organization which will do anything at all on behalf of man as an individual and that is a free and voluntary brotherhood of writers, the International P.E.N.

LILA RAY

The Conscious Mind: A Commentary on the Mystics. By KENNETH WALKER. (Rider and Company, London. 176 pp. 1962. 21*s*.)

This "commentary on the mystics" is the sequel to Mr. Walker's *The Unconscious Mind* and a progression from it up the scale of consciousness. Where the earlier book, dealing with the lower levels of the scale, sets in their place aspects of mind which are properly speaking unconscious, this book moves on to the higher levels of the scale, and discusses those aspects of mind which alone can properly be spoken of as conscious levels which lie above the mid-position of our everyday waking state. The two books together, then, give a perspective of this scale, correct many errors of psycho-analytic and other attitudes to the unconscious and conscious minds, and serve to show us how few of the scale's degrees are normally known to us: as the sense of sight perceives only a part of the spectrum, so our ordinary waking consciousness leaves much out of account, whether below it or above it. In these two books, in fact, Mr. Walker has got the matter of consciousness straight, and we are much obliged to him.

Where the higher degrees of the scale of consciousness are concerned Mr. Walker turns more particularly eastwards; most of his examples of those who have experienced, and later made the inevitable unsuccessful attempt to describe, states of consciousness beyond the waking state are Oriental. But he has not failed to deal also with Occidental mystics, such as Plotinus, Boehme and R. M. Bucke; while it is good to see that remarkable man, Edward Carpenter, so little regarded nowadays, brought back into his own. Indeed, the prime effect of Mr. Walker's new book is to show that experiences of higher consciousness are ultimately undifferentiated, from whatever part of the globe the experiencer comes, in whatever age he lives, in whatever language he speaks. Higher consciousness, Oriental or Occidental, is always one consciousness, as it is always consciousness of the One. And it is of course not insignificant that Mr. Walker pays tribute throughout the book to his own teacher, G. Gurdjieff, who had a peculiar genius for demonstrating that East is West and West is East, and ever the twain *do* meet — and particularly and urgently need to meet, as each other's correctives, in our own day.

This book is admirably lucid, scientific in the real sense of the word and open-minded, and for these reasons it is fully persuasive without attempting to persuade. As an introduction to its subject it could scarcely be bettered, and there will be many, on the threshold of an interest in the matters Mr. Walker discusses, who will find in his book exactly what they are looking for: objective and intelligible guidance towards the understanding and realization of that "something more" in man which is his birthright.

It is a great pity that so good a book should be marred by many textual faults and by footnotes, a bibliography and an index so inaccurate and incomplete as to be well-nigh useless. We must beg Mr. Walker to have these things remedied in the later editions, which the book as a whole certainly deserves.

R. H. WARD

Hinduism Through the Ages. D. S. SARMA. (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 284 pp. 2nd ed., 1962. Rs. 2.00; 3*s*. 6*d*.; 90 cents)

From the title one would naturally have expected a treatment of the several periods in the history of Hinduism in some appropriate proportions. Instead this book is devoted mainly to the last period of Hinduism, namely the Renaissance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. All the previous panorama of Hinduism in three millennia is compressed into fifty-six pages, which necessarily constitute no more than a bare outline of a historical introduction to the main work on the Renaissance. Hence the title is something of a misnomer.

The learned author, who is well known as an expositor of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and of Hinduism, has given us a valuable book. The story of the Reform movements that arose inside the pale of Hinduism in the nineteenth century and the Renaissance which began in the last quarter of that century, and attained its fruition by the middle of the present, has been narrated by the author in a flawless style, lucid and compact. He gives an objective, dispassionate and analytical account of the various movements, the great personalities that gave rise to them and a calm appraisal of their worth and contribution to the rebirth of the great Hindu religion. The chapters on Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Radhakrishnan are masterly expositions of the work and teachings of these great makers of modern India.

One point requires notice. The author points to the view that Sri Shankaracharya belonged to the period soon after the Buddha as an extreme instance of uncritical statement. Far from being uncritical the view is nearer the truth than the conventionally accepted eighth century A.D. as the period of Sri Shankaracharya. The records kept in the Kamakoti Peetha at Kanchi and also references in Sri Shankaracharya's writings to the Buddhist teachings, not to speak of occult sources of knowledge, make it highly probable that Sri Shankaracharya belonged to the period soon after the passing of the Buddha.

D. GURUMURTI

The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan. Vol. VI. *The Alchemy of Happiness*. (Published for the International Headquarters of the Sufi Movement, Geneva, by Barrie and Rockliff, London. 277 pp. 1962. 32*s*. 6*d*.)

The theme of the earlier volumes — the relationship of God with man — is developed with the same mastery in this further collection of inspired lectures.

Man must have an object. If he pursues it faithfully and logically it will equip him to find God, for it is man's very purposefulness that constitutes God's purpose in him. Man has no other way to climb from embryonic ignorance. By stressing his "oneness" with God, while he is still at a self-centred level, a man simply inflates his own lower self, magnifying the one obstacle to the union he desires.

If a man feels himself cut off from God it is not because he has sought what he must in life, but because he has refused or failed to see the all-embracing nature of God's love, which could only have created that need in him, that driving force in his life, for His own greater purpose.

It is in a man's mastery of his own nature that he approaches likeness to God. It does not matter what the objective if it spurs him to this aim. The God man can know is the God with a purpose in man's life, and God differs from man in that God is self-controlled.

We do not know God by losing ourselves in His Primal Being, losing thus too His purpose, by which our separate life is sustained. We know God, as we are able to know Him, by seeing our real purpose as His own, mastering, not fleeing from the material conditions which are His workshop. This is the message of the *Gita*. It is the teaching of Christ.

In explaining the way to man's final triumph over his lower, temporary self, the Sufi's concluding words are:—

> One step is annihilation in the ideal of form, the next in the ideal of name, and the third step is annihilation in the nameless and formless.

This third step can be taken safely after man's relationship with God has been solidly set by the other two, where it would be fatal without them, because what is annihilated with the lower self is no more than the broken mould of the perfected self, which now stands firm without it.

D. S. MAXTED

Principles of Cartesian Philosophy. By BARUCH SPINOZA. Translated by HARRY E. WEDECK. (Philosophical Library, New York. 192 pp. 1961. $4.75)

Few reviewers would feel confident in undertaking to review such a book as this, an exposition by one master of another master's philosophy. That Spinoza in a way developed the Cartesian ideas is fairly well known even to undergraduate students of philosophy. It is however little known that the author of the *Ethics* was also the author of this excellent manual of Cartesian philosophy. Its translation into English must therefore be wholeheartedly welcomed.

It is seldom that a great philosopher (certainly Hegel could not do so) so completely places himself behind the scene and so faithfully enters into the spirit of another philosopher without adding the least note of criticism. And yet how simple and graceful the mere exposition is, how much nearer to the heart of Cartesian philosophy it takes us than do all the ambitious projects of modern Cartesian scholarship! Spinoza's manual not only gives us an illuminating account of Descartes's thought, but at the same time could, in the reviewer's opinion, serve as a good introduction to the philosophical concepts of the seventeenth century.

In the part entitled "Thoughts on Metaphysics," Spinoza gracefully elaborates the notions of Being with its different modes, the distinction between essence and existence, the meanings of "necessary," "impossible," "possible" and "contingent," the ideas of truth and falsity, time and eternity, God and goodness. One example of the directness of the great master's method could be here quoted. To the philosopher who still doubts whether essence is distinct from existence in created things (let the modern Existentialist take note of this!), Spinoza's advice is this:—

> If he merely approaches any sculptor or wood-carver, they will show him how they conceive in a certain orderliness a statue that does not yet exist and afterwards they will present it to him as existing.

I wish this part on "Thoughts on Metaphysics" were recommended as a *must* for our undergraduates doing philosophy as their major.

JITENDRANATH MOHANTY

The Adyar Library Bulletin (Brahmavidyā). Jubilee volume: Vol. XXV, parts 1 to 4. Edited by V. RAGHAVAN, K. KUNNUNI RAJA and RADHA BURNIER. ix+634 pp. 1961. Annual Subscription, Rs. 8.00)

It was on the thirtieth anniversary of the passing of Colonel Olcott, who founded the Adyar Library in 1886, that the first *fasciculus* of this Bulletin was issued; and it is only appropriate that the present Silver Jubilee Volume of the Bulletin celebrates also the 75th anniversary of the Library.

Many branches of Indology are covered by the forty-eight papers here, which, as is natural in a compilation like this, are not all of the same merit. But even the more important of them are so many that it is impossible to discuss them all in a brief review like this. Reference can be made now only to some as representatives of particular branches of study. H. W. Bailey discusses the "Cognates of Pūjā." Burrow continues his study of the "Etymology of Sanskrit *Karmāra*." Alfred Master writes on a new "Phase of Dravidian Phonetics," supplementing the work of his predecessors. Alsdorf discusses a few verses from the *Atharvaveda* whose meaning is obscure. Gonda draws our attention to an interesting episode of the *Mahāvrata* ritual where a *brahmacārin* and a harlot exchange abuse. Walther Wüst's *Bemerkungen* on the Ṛgvedic *Vrata* (p. 414 ff.) surprisingly ignores contributions made in India on the subject. Betty Heimann writes on her favourite theme comparing early Greek philosophy with Indian. The present reviewer attempts to show that, even in Buddhist literature, there are many conceptions which appear to contend with the regular doctrine of Karma but which are really there to temper it. V. Raghavan suggests some corrections in the extant text of the *Abhinavabhāratī*. There are also a few interesting papers on Art, Archæology, History, Sociology, Law and Medicine.

The editors are to be congratulated on the production of this *Festschrift* which is easily among the best of its class.

H. G. NARAHARI

The Science of Wisdom. A Trilogy. Vol. III. *The Fire of Knowing*. By. C. J. TOYNE. (Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd., London. 180 pp. Frontispiece. 1962. 15*s*.)

This is a book which by a (to the present reviewer) tiringly circuitous route arrives, more or less, at the basic cosmological and theistic concepts of the ancient Hindu philosophical religion, although the author is seemingly unaware that these concepts have influenced him. This is a fairly common phenomenon today in the world of thought, for though the concepts have penetrated, and in some instances permeated, the minds of many of the principal Western thinkers during the past two thousand years, the fact of the percolation has, very often, not been recognized, even, sometimes, by those to whom it occurred.

Mr. Toyne opens with: "We often hear the religious aphorism: There is no reality but God." This is the fundamental of the Ancient Wisdom, and those who accept it proceed to demonstrate its truth by examining and describing the nature of all the things that are known to us, organic and inorganic, from the vastest heavenly galaxy to the minutest micro-organism. Mr. Toyne, however, goes on to speak of all these things and creatures as being "*levels* of Reality," thereby according them a significance that is denied to them by the Ancient Wisdom, which says that all created things are only relatively real: in describing them one does not use the capital R.

Mr. Toyne speaks of "the scientifically-minded who, gazing through the microscope or spectroscope, see evidence of much reality." Quite so. And that the "scientifically-minded" receive in these days homage which is far beyond their due, through its being so erroneously believed that in exploring the

physical field they somehow, in some way, acquire also metaphysical knowledge, is one of the reasons why the man-in-the street remains so much in confusion and darkness. There are no levels of *Reality*. Below the One, the only true, Reality, there are only levels of relative reality; all the levels are empirically real for the things and creatures which pertain to and function in them. The thought of the "scientifically-minded" persons of the kind spoken of is within *Maya*. The first thing to do in the effort to comprehend Reality is to understand what *Maya* is.

CHARLES J. SEYMOUR

A Philosophical Interpretation of Economics. By J. K. MEHTA. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 288 pp. 1962. 35*s*.)

The purpose of the book is to examine the philosophical foundation of economics, and to do this the author reduces orthodox concepts and theories to their component parts.

The ultimate aim is not clear. It is true that the attainment of truth is an aim in itself, but does the search for it in this case imply that the author is in disagreement with the present economic organization? If so, it must be stated that the economist is concerned only with what it is, and not with what it ought to be. The latter is a problem for ethics or politics.

In any case, the author starts from unsafe premises in isolating the factors the better to study them. Economics deals with the actions of human beings, with their mixture of noble and ignoble sentiments, in equating their unlimited wants with resources that are scarce and have alternative uses. The forces involved react with one another in a thousand different ways, with as many points of equilibrium, all of them valid. What is true at one moment of time, given, say, certain proportions of capital, labour, and organizing skill, may be false at another time, and will be different at the same time if the proportions of the factors are changed.

But this having been said, the work before us remains a first-class intellectual exercise, even though the mental acrobatics leave us dazzled rather than instructed. The work is, however, most useful in giving us a projection of Eastern philosophy in a branch of knowledge that has hitherto been dominated by Western thought.

L. DELGADO

Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas. By ROMILA THAPAR. (Oxford University Press. xii+283 pp. 6 Plates and 4 Maps. 1961. Rs. 28.00)

Much has been written about the Mauryas, and much more about the Maurya Emperor Asoka. Yet there is room for ever more; for what is known about them from literary sources is more or less of legendary character. Such data always stand in need of substantiation at the hands of dependable sources like monuments and inscriptions. Of these, quite a lot has already been laid bare by the spade of the archæologist, while fresh antiquities still come to light every now and then, necessitating additions and alterations in the existing knowledge of the subject. Even at the time of writing this review, news came of the discovery of another minor rock edict of Asoka at the village of Ahraura in the Mirzapur District, U.P., which, it is claimed, throws decisive light on a much debated point, namely the date of the Buddha's *parinirvana*.

In these circumstances, Dr. Thapar's dissertation on *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* is a very welcome addition, specially because it presents an

analysis "with a difference in emphasis." The work is, generally speaking, of a recapitulatory nature, yet it does not lack in originality. The discussion on Asoka's *Dhamma* is both refreshing and convincing. Dr. Thapar has successfully dispelled the recent myth that the Gandhian policy of toleration and non-violence is in continuation of the tradition from Asoka's time. We agree with her that "Asoka was not the naive convert to Buddhism that Buddhist sources would have us believe" but that he was shrewd enough to make the best use of the new *Dhamma* as a tool for winning the hearts of his subjects and thereby consolidating his vast empire.

The chapter on "Society and Economic Activity "is particularly enlightening and eminently readable. The author has obviously taken great pains in utilizing the vast and varied data, both Indian and foreign. She has presented a fairly comprehensive picture of the conditions prevailing during the Mauryan period.

She has tried to maintain her avowedly objective approach throughout, though here and there "feelings" seem to have got the better of "reasoning." She feels that Asoka had Greek blood in him through his mother or grandmother, but cannot prove it (p. 20). Accepting the doubtful reading *Priyadarsin* in the Aramaic inscription from Taxila, she says that there can be little doubt that it referred to Asoka (p. 22). Here she is contradicting herself, because Asoka, during his stay at Taxila as prince or even as viceroy, was not yet known by the name or title *Priyadarsin*, which, she admits (p. 227), he adopted only on his coronation as emperor.

The numerous orthographic mistakes in the Sanskrit and Pali words in the book (nearly half a dozen on p. 227 alone) do not make a happy impression, though they hardly affect the main thesis. In the list of minor rock edicts, on p. 5, "Gujarra and Jhansi" should read "Gujarra near Jhansi." It is in this Gujarra edict that Asoka is mentioned both by his regal titles and by his personal name. The one at Maski gives only his personal name and all the others only his regal titles.

B. CH. CHHABRA

Society and State in the Mughal Period. By TARA CHAND. (Patel Memorial Lectures. The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi. 112 pp. 1961. Re. 1.25)

In his three Patel Memorial Lectures delivered in 1960, Dr. Tara Chand has painted a picture of the political, economic and social conditions in India during the two centuries of Mughal rule in India. It is difficult to compress the complex of the life of a whole nation in such varied fields over such a long period into a few pages and do justice to the subject. But Dr. Tara Chand has done this with singular success.

The broad picture emerging from Dr. Tara Chand's analysis is that of an India where "caste," among both Hindus and Muslims, constituted the dominant characteristic of social organization. Villages were the bedrock of administrative and economic organization and religion was the governing factor in the daily lives of the people. The two main communities lived together; but the *Ulemas* and the *pandits* were the sources of culture as also its arbiters. During the latter part of the period a number of popular religious movements of the *Bhakti* cult carried culture to common people and sought to bring them together "into the communion of a faith which transcended social, intellectual and communal barriers." One

product of the communion is the evolution of Hindi. It was also reflected in painting, architecture and music.

Dr. Tara Chand's lectures, read in the proper spirit, can make a distinct contribution to national integration.

C. V. H. RAO

Education For Leisure. By S. R. RANGANATHAN. (Asia Publishing House, Bombay. 179 pp. 1961. Rs. 9.00)

This is the fourth edition of the book based on a series of lectures delivered by the author in 1944 at Madras. The purpose of these lectures was to provide certain practical knowledge to the members of the Indian Women's Civic Corps. The topics were social service, leisure, education, adult education, books, literacy, curricula, methods, etc. As a matter of fact this book is very useful from the adult-education point of view. It is also a good book for the social worker.

The most important and perhaps the most useful chapter is that on leisure. Dr. Ranganathan has correctly described the nature of leisure and has shown that leisure is creative. Spare time must be utilized in the service of others. By making others happy the individual attains happiness. Thus in this volume we find an undercurrent of a philosophy of life based upon service, creativity and self-growth. It is a practical book, for it deals with concrete problems facing social workers and educators. The style is appealing and marked by clear and concise exposition of ideas which are common and yet not aptly appreciated. This book will be an effective instrument for social and cultural change if the suggestions contained in it are followed to the full.

SITA RAM JAYASWAL

A Cure of Delinquents: The Treatment of Maladjustment. By ROBERT W. SHIELDS. (Heinemann, London. 191 pp. 1962. 21*s*.)

Discussion of delinquency ranges over many fields and every self-appointed expert knows the causes — bad parents, neglectful mothers, broken homes and so on. The real experts are less sure about causes or cures but they know that the basic loss, which may lead to serious disturbance or delinquency in a child, is a loss of affection and security. A child so deprived will go to extraordinary lengths of aggression, stealing or even self-torture, to test out the reactions of those around him. Only the most stable and patient workers can help and Dr. Shields describes in this study the efforts made in a special residential school for maladjusted (often delinquent) boys in London. He tells of almost incredible conduct by boys in the school, sometimes to be seen as a welcome sign of development of a personality in the completely placid, withdrawn, non-co-operative child and of the equally amazing tolerance displayed by the staff (and which he himself as the therapist had to display more than anyone else) in accepting the aggression of the boys and patiently working through, or more often just waiting through, these phases until there was a relief of tension and constructive measures could begin.

This is a story displaying all the most noble virtues of care, affection and patience but it also shows that those virtues by themselves cannot suffice in the treatment of the difficult and dangerous child who is seriously disturbed. There must also be a deep understanding based on the acceptance of psychoanalytical theory.

Dr. Shields shows the all too common danger of the school which can portray a fine authority and discipline. It is

comparatively easy for the maladjusted to conform to rules and regulations which order their divided lives for them and relieve them of responsibility. But the ultimate effect is dangerous, for the maladjustment is liable to display itself again as soon as the restraints and boundaries of a continually ordered life have gone. On the other hand Dr. Shields has equally little faith in the "free treatment" of maladjustment, for here the child has nothing against which to match himself and no guidance for the redirection of his aggressions. The ideal school is between the two and needs careful conducting with only small numbers. Bredinghurst at which Dr. Shields worked approached this and used the most imaginative and apparently simple methods.

The Cure of Delinquents is moving and encouraging but leaves us asking how many of us could offer the endless support with the lack of any recognition which this work involves.

FRANK DAWTRY

Osmania Journal of English Studies. (Department of English, Osmania University, Hyderabad. No. 1. 1961. Rs. 2.50; 4*s*.; 50 cents)

This new venture in the Indian academic world is described as a "Journal of English Language, Literature and Philology." Professor V. K. Gokak's opening article, "Progress in Language Viewed in Relation to Literary Expression," is an attempt to probe into the interrelations of language and literature. Modern English has indeed developed (in Bradley's words) a "noiseless grammatical machinery." Most of the inflectional distinctions have now disappeared; the gender distinctions have been eliminated; and there are hardly a hundred strong verbs in the language now. Many more losses too could be listed. But there is an occasional gain or two — as in the "building up of a rich system of *tenses*." How do these changes in the grammatical structure influence the literary expression? As Professor Gokak says,

> ... the English language has lost considerably in aesthetic expressiveness because of them. With inflectional endings has also disappeared their musical expressiveness. The poetry of the old simple subjunctive tends to disappear from the language, unless it is used for archaic charm.

Professor Gokak's essay is but the first of a series promised by him, and its successors will be awaited with interest. The articles by H. N. L. Sastry, V. A. Shahane and Shiv K. Kumar are evidently extracted from their doctoral dissertations on Sir Edwin Arnold, E. M. Forster and "The Stream of Consciousness Novel" respectively. V. Madhusudan Reddy looks at *The Four Quartets* from a philosophical point of view, links up the concept of Time and Eternity in *Burnt Norton* with Sri Aurobindo's reconciliation of desire and death within the all-embracing shell of love, and points out that "*Savitri*, his great epic, raises the whole problem to its cosmic proportions and brings in the necessary divine elements whose intervention alone can lead to a successful resolution of such irreconcilables as love, desire and death." The Journal should offer a welcome platform for researchers and for the exchange of critical comment.

PREMA NANDAKUMAR

Vaishnava Lyrics. Translated by MATILAL DAS. (Bharat Sanskriti Parishad, Calcutta. x+98 pp. 1954. Received late. Rs. 3.00)

The lyrics of the mediæval Vaishnava poets form a glorious chapter of Bengali literature. These poems, popularly known as *padavalis*, centre upon

Radha and Krishna — Radha's love for Krishna symbolizing the soul's thirst for God. There is a divine lilt, an irresistible charm in these "simple, sensuous and passionate" outpourings. Erotic they are, as erotic as the Song of Songs; but behind this apparent eroticism is revealed a distinct mystical experience. They are among the noblest embodiments of the infinite passion for which the finite heart yearns.

The translations are divided into three sections: in the first are traced the beginnings of love between Radha and Krishna; in the second is shown the deep attachment linking them together; and in the final is plumbed the salt, estranging sea of separation. To these is added a small sheaf of translations from various Vaishnava poets on diverse themes.

The translations, made twenty years ago, certainly have aged — in their ponderous prolixity one fails to catch that romantic ardour, that vivacious spontaneity, that lyric abandon, which characterize the originals. The gushing, nothing-like-this-have-you-seen-before attitude of the translator gives an unconscious note of falsetto to the translations.

One point the translator has completely ignored in his long-winded Introduction. This is the relation of the *padavalis* to the traditional form of music known as *kirtan*. I have heard the knowledgeable maintain that the success of these lyrics depends to a great extent on the musical accompaniment provided by the *khole*, the *kartal* and other musical instruments.

DILIP KUMAR SEN

LEAVES FROM A PARIS DIARY

[**Shri Baldoon Dhingra** writes of a project that should be valuable.— ED.]

WE ARE LIVING, it need hardly be repeated, in a world of conferences and debates, round-table meetings and *colloqués*. Seldom, however, is there dialogue or conversation. Monologists are legion and orators endless. Yet what we seem to need more than ever, even among friends, is conversation; and this applies, in larger measure, to peoples too. Between people of different generations there is hardly any dialogue at all. Everyone is so sure of himself and older men always insist that age gives them wisdom and the prerogative to speak with authority on any subject.

For many years now I have thought we might meet, from time to time, to encourage people of different nations and generations and of different "formations" anxious to enter into a dialogue. The Abbé Pierre has always welcomed this idea and many others to whom I have spoken agreed with alacrity to converse.

We thought of meeting once a fortnight in different homes, in ever widening circles, the number, if possible, not to exceed sixteen lest the conversation dwindle and fritter away into idle chatterings.

We met, we sixteen people, of all ages, and of different "formations" — scientists, industrialists, artists, poets, stage hands, sociologists, psychiatrists — in the house of Monsieur and Madame Leblois. In order to give some idea of what we were aiming to achieve or what the essential aim of a dialogue may be said to be, I prepared, using some ideas suggested by Père Teihard de Chardin and Martin Buber, the following note, which was read out, in French translation, to those present. We hope to meet, in turn, in the homes of the Leblois family, Madame Paen and Mlle. Jeannine Harrault and, of course, in my own.

TOWARDS A DIALOGUE

"All real life is meeting" — thus Martin Buber put it. It is relationship. And a relationship can only be entered into with one's whole being. In order to do that one has to suspend all partial action. To the man who loves, people are neither good nor evil, they just *are*. The man who hates sees only part of a being. Yet the man who straightforwardly hates is nearer to relation than the man who neither hates nor loves.

The world of primitive man, cruel though it was, was real. It is better to hate men than to treat them as objects to be made use of.

We are born individuals, though we are not persons. Man's personality is called into being by those who enter into relation with it. To become a person is to respond to what happens inwardly, as it were. Relationship has to be mutual. This does not mean unity or identity; each member remains himself and that means he is different from the other. Another person is not to be a projection of oneself. Often man sets man at a distance and makes himself independent. He is, therefore, able to enter into relation, in his own individual status, with those like himself. Genuine conversation, like every genuine fulfilment of relation between men, means acceptance of otherness.

This means that, while one may desire to influence the other and to lead him to share in one's relation to truth, one accepts and confirms him in his being a particular man made in a particular way. One wants to have him react to his own truth in accordance with his individuality. The manipulation of propaganda and suggestion wants to make use of man. To manipulators of such media men are not independent human beings, but things. The word "truth" may mean different things to different people, but between man and man it means that one shows oneself to the other for what one is. This means one communicates whatever one wishes to with one's whole being.

To make a dialogue real one must make the contribution of one's being without distortion. True speech involves thought as to the way in which one brings to words what one has in mind. In genuine dialogue the thought of one's effect as speaker should not outweigh the thought of what one has to say. Genuine conversation exists between two persons as also among many voices. Not everyone present need speak for these dialogues to be genuine: no one can be a mere observer. Each must be ready to share with the others, and no one who really takes part can know in advance what he will say or not say. Genuine dialogue means seeing the other or experiencing the other side. Experiencing the other side is the essence of genuine love. The "eros" of monologue is a display of subjective feelings; the "eros" of dialogue means the turning of the otherness to one's own heart. The monological man is not aware of the otherness of the other, but instead tries to incorporate the other in himself.

BALDOON DHINGRA

CORRESPONDENCE

LITERATURE AND SOCIAL MORALITY

As a discussion on literary themes, the International Writers' Conference, which went on for five days at the recent Edinburgh Festival, was a complete failure, but as an example of what is wrong with literature today it was, I think, of the utmost value.

American literature, which dominated

the conference, was represented by such writers as Mary McCarthy, Norman Mailer, William Burroughs and Henry Miller. The discussions ranged chiefly round such questions as censorship and the degree of commitment felt by the writer.

Mary McCarthy presided over the discussion on censorship. She guided the conference along the line of considering how far abnormal sexual relations — homosexuality, incest, Lesbianism, etc. — should form the normal subject-matter of the modern novel. The Americans were most enthusiastic in their defence of the writers who go beyond the bounds of ordinary moral relationships and write books which cause endless trouble to the censors.

One of the few people she called upon to speak — apart from the platform — was a gentleman who described himself as "an ex-professional pornographer" meaning, as he explained, that he sold copies of books not usually available at ordinary booksellers. He demanded complete freedom from censorship, not only on literary grounds but also for the crudest pornography.

His remarks were taken up enthusiastically by Mary McCarthy, Norman Mailer, author of *The Naked and the Dead*, Henry Miller and Edward Burroughs, whose book *The Naked Lunch* has not yet got beyond America, for publishers elsewhere seem nervous of it. He was described by Mary McCarthy and Norman Mailer as the writer who had the most influence upon his contemporaries.

It was left to a turbaned and bearded Indian writer, Khushwant Singh, to comment gently upon the space occupied by sexual abnormalities in current Western novels. In India, he remarked bitingly, they thought that other matters were more important.

Towards the end of the afternoon when the assembly had been exhausted by repeated demands for a dubious freedom, Mary McCarthy explained that she had promised to give an opportunity to Marion Friedmann, a South African novelist, whose book had been banned from South Africa some months before its publication in London. This book is called *The Slap*. Miss Friedmann read a thoughtful analysis of the racial situation as it affected writers in South Africa. Coming at the end of a very different kind of discussion, the audience were not able to switch to this, though, obviously, it is far more important than a defence of pornography.

Rebecca West spoke words of common sense on the subject of the demand for complete freedom to publish anything. "We cannot light-heartedly agree to this," she said. "I was present at the Nuremberg War Criminals' trial and, although I am opposed to capital punishment, I cannot feel sorry over the fate of some of these men. I know there is a close connection between the cruelty, torture and sadism prevalent in Nazi Germany and the flood of books pandering to sexual immorality and abnormality." These words from one of the most acute literary critics alive today stressed the social responsibility of the novelist. But it was definitely a minority view among the speakers.

At the Press conference the following morning the writers were asked whether they should not have given more time to the discussion of political censorship in various countries rather than have talked so much about the place of sex in literature. Mary McCarthy replied that when Marion Friedmann spoke on political censorship in South Africa "the audience went out in droves," proving they did not want such discussion.

A novelist from Yugoslavia disagreed and said that political censorship should have been the main topic. "We on the other side of the Iron Curtain feel that writers in the West are not facing up to their social responsibilities," he said. "They fill their books with all this talk about sex instead of giving their readers

some real guidance about the problems of modern life. We would like to discuss the differences between our approach and yours. We are all writing about human beings. How far do we agree and where do we differ?"

This touched a real nerve centre in world literature but the American writers in control had used their weight and influence to steer the conference away from such discussion. There was a time in pre-war America when their novelists were noted for acute social criticism. One has only to think of Sinclair Lewis with his *Main Street* and *Babbitt* to see how far away they have travelled.

The war was followed by the McCarthy repressive era in social matters, when writers were afraid to speak out in case this led to imprisonment, boycott, isolation, lack of livelihood. The egregious McCarthy era in the social and political sphere has now been succeeded by an era in literature in which writers are compounding for lack of courage, social vision and responsibility by filling their books with sexual perversity, which does not arouse social hostility. An assumption of boldness covers up their intellectual cowardice.

We live in a time of moral chaos when, under the threat of the atom bomb, young people are snatching what pleasure and interest they can from a life that they feel is insecure. It is, of course, inevitable that literature should reflect that chaos. But at the same time writers have a duty to try to help resolve this chaos. We cannot accept a purely mechanical "Adding Machine" mentality. Elmer Rice, in his early play of that title, did better in suggesting lines of thought which included criticism of a mechanical civilization. To say that young people want this, or that an audience will not listen to that, is not enough. Literature should be a guide.

In Edinburgh we even had the spectacle of Alexander Trocchi glorifying the victims of the dope habit and proclaiming himself a "junkie" on the flimsy ground that to take dope was a form of "social protest." Obviously, taking dope or drugs is not a form of social protest but of social surrender. The same may be said of the sexual dope which fills so many books in our day.

R. M. Fox

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"————————*ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

One small item of bright news against the dark clouds of racial hatred and of threatening international relations is the election, by a considerable majority, of Albert Luthuli, the courageous and noble African chief, as the new Rector of Glasgow University, Scotland. Chief Luthuli is a true practising Christian, whose non-violent action against apartheid in South Africa has brought him a Nobel Peace Prize (1960), but who is confined at present to a small area in Durban, which he may not leave except by special permission of the South African Government. It is hoped, but not certain, that he will be allowed to come to Glasgow for the ceremony of installation as Rector. This is an honour that has been held in the past by many distinguished personages in various fields, political, literary and so on. It may be noted that Chief Luthuli's defeated opponents were Dr. Robert McIntyre, a former Scottish Nationalist M.P., Lord Rosebery and Mr. Heath, the Lord Privy Seal, who is very much in the public eye as the leader of the negotiations for the entry of Great Brit-

ain into the European Common Market. Mr. Heath gained 773 votes to Chief Luthuli's 1,278.

There has been fear in some quarters that the Common Market might become a kind of economic "closed club" against non-European nations, an obstacle to a larger, all-comprehensive unity. It is noteworthy that the Scottish University students, in their choice, have disregarded the "symbol" of the lesser concept, the Common Market, to show their appreciation of a deeper ideal, and of moral character, regardless of race.

The spate of new publications in Britain, as mentioned in last month's "Ends and Sayings," continues. Among the more important is the weekly, *New Society,* devoted to Social Science, and published by the proprietors of the highly successful *New Scientist,* launched in 1956. The Editorial in the first issue (October 4th, 1962) points out how the expansion of natural science has not been balanced by equal progress in human relations. Man "appears to be better at dealing with things than he is at dealing with himself and his fellowmen."

Whether the human sciences can be considered "exact" or not, their potential usefulness, it is said, makes them essential; and the aim of the journal is to "link the study of society with practice," to link the academic and the practitioner, "the expert and the layman (though in a sense no one is a layman in human relations)" and to bring together "the students of each of the social sciences." It plans to publish descriptions of investigations and conclusions, its own and those of other researchers, and to present its reports without partisanship. It considers "the morals and ethics of society to be an essential part of our field of operations," and affirms that "social science, like natural science, is bound by no frontiers. . . . The whole world is the social scientist's laboratory."

Perhaps the first number, interesting and varied as it is, has an air of a humanist's laboratory. Perhaps it is inevitable, and it takes time to "make a soul." But if the new journal can steer clear of "reified" human relations, as Erich Fromm calls them (*Saturday Review,* March 16th, 1957) — that is, treating man as a thing, to be manipulated like other things and materials — it should have a future of much worth.

A further publication whose first issue appeared in the autumn of 1962 is the Canadian Quarterly *Our Generation Against Nuclear War.* It is

> devoted to the research, theory, and review of the problems of world peace and directed towards presenting alternative solutions to human conflict, eliminating war as a way of life.

Its Statement of Purpose declares its wish "to create something that can speak directly to the anxieties of this generation" and "to bring together people of diverse skills who have a common interest in seeing real problems through to complete solutions and carrying these solutions into action."

Its list of contributors include several British M.P.s, the Editor of *Peace News,* Hugh Brock, Dr. Gunther Anders of Vienna, Dr. Erich Fromm, Brigadier-General Hugh B. Hester (U.S. Army, Ret.), Dr. Homer Jack, Robert Jungk, Kingsley Martin, Lewis Mumford, Professor Linus Pauling, Devi Prasad, J. B. Priestley and many other distinguished names. Bertrand Russell and Norman Cousins, Editor of *Saturday Review,* were among those to send messages of good will to the publication, with the hope that it would have "a profound effect on opinion," being "a much-needed voice." The emphasis on the constructive as well as the opposing aspect of the problem is a hopeful sign for success.